# Encyclopaedia of Indian War of Independence

## Vol. 6

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# Introduction

Pal, Bipin Chandra (1858-1932) a patriot, nationalist politician, renowned orator, journalist and writer. Bipin Chandra Pal was born on 7 November 1858 in Sylhet in a wealthy Hindu Kayastha family. His father Ramchandra Pal, a village zamindar and a prominent member of the Sylhet Bar was influenced by Hindu rituals and Islamic thought though he was a follower of Vaishnavism.

The only son of his parents, Bipin Chandra Pal took his early education from a Maulvi in Sylhet town. He had his formal education at Sylhet Government High School from where he passed the Entrance Examination. He then got himself admitted in the Presidency College, but gave up his studies before graduating. His literary competence was, however, remarkable and he studied the Gita and the Upanishads extensively.

Pal started his career in early 1879 as a Headmaster of a High School and served in this capacity in different schools in and outside Sylhet. For sometime (1890-91) he worked as the librarian and secretary of the Calcutta Public Library. While in Calcutta during his student life, he came in close contact with some prominent personalities like KESHAB CHANDRA SEN, SHIBNATH SHASTRI and Bijoy Krishna Goswami. Under the influence of Keshab Chandra Sen he was attracted to the Brahma movement. Bijoy Krishna Goswami also tremendously influenced his spiritual ideas. His association with Sivanath Sastri made him conscious of the spirit of social revolt and patriotism.

SURENDRANATH BANERJEA inspired Bipin Pal to take part in active politics. Soon, however, he became a convert to the

extremist ideas of BG Tilak, Lajpat Rai and AUROBINDA GHOSH, though he could not accept Tilak's concept of Hindu nationalism. He was an exponent of 'composite patriotism' which, he thought, was suitable for a country like India.

Bipin Chandra Pal was connected with the progressive force of the Congress since 1885 and attended the second and the third annual sessions of the Congress held in Calcutta and Madras in 1886 and 1887 respectively. He compelled the Congress to take up the cause of the Assam Tea-garden labourers who were cruelly treated by the planters.

Bipin Pal went to study comparative theology in England in 1898 but after a year came back to India and started preaching the ideal of Swaraj (complete independence) through his weekly journal the New India. Imbued with great patriotic zeal, he devoted himself to the freedom movement of India. He presided over the Bombay session of the INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS in 1904. Following the PARTITION OF BENGAL, 1905, Bipin Pal started a daily paper the Bande Mataram and became its chief editor. He firmly stood against the partition of Bengal on the ground that it was a calculated move of the government to split the Bengalis and thus to break their growing political influence. With a view to enlisting the mass support behind the anti-partition campaign, Bipin Pal, along with other anti-partitionists, organised propaganda tour in various parts of Bengal, Assam, UP and Madras.

Pal was one of the architects of the SWADESHI MOVEMENT, which swept over India during the days following the partition of Bengal. He suffered imprisonment for six months in 1907 for his refusal to give evidence against Aurovinda Ghosh in the so-called Bande Mataram Sedition Case. On his release, Pal went to England in 1908 'to lead the life of an enforced exile' and stayed there for three years. After the First World War, he visited England for the third time in 1919 as a member of the Home Rule League deputation led by Tilak. He presided over the Bengal Provincial Conference held at Barisal in 1921. He did not involve in the NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT because it was merged with the Khilafat cause and criticised the BENGAL PACT (1923) of CHITTA RANJAN DAS. He could not share the views of Maulana Mohammad Ali on the nature of the communal problem in India



(1920-25). From 1925 onward, he, however, retired from active politics.

Bipin Chandra Pal encouraged journalism and started the Bangla weekly Paridarshak in Sylhet (1886). He worked as Assistant Editor of the Bengali Public Opinion (1882) and served the Lahore Tribune for a short time (1887). For sometime he was the editor of The Democrat and The Independent. He published a biography (in Bangla) of Queen Victoria in 1887. Among his other books Indian Nationalism, Nationality and Empire, Swaraj and the Present Situation, The Basis of Social Reform, The Soul of India, The New Spirit and Studies in Hinduism are prominent.

A man of undaunted spirit, Bipin Chandra Pal made no compromise in the sphere of politics when it was a question of conviction and conscience. He revolted against the evils and abuses of the Hindu society at a very early stage of his life. He championed the cause of Indian education with special emphasis on female education and advocated the equality of male and female. Being a member of the Brahma Samaj, he married Nrityakali Devi, a Brahmin widow. After her death, he was married to another Brahmin widow, Birajmohini Devi, a distant relation of Surendranath Banerjea.

A renowned orator, Bipin Chandra Pal inspired his audience during the Indian nationalist movements. He occupies a unique place in the history of the freedom movement of India. He died in Calcutta in 1932.

Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932) of the famous national triumvirate?Lal-Bal-Pal?is an almost forgotten figure today. In the early part of his political life he almost hypnotized all his countrymen in India. He was the chief shining star of the agitation against the Partition of Bengal which came to be popularly known as the Swadeshi Movement.

Bipin Chandra Pal was born in Sylhet in undivided Bengal on November 7, 1858. He passed his matriculation examination at the age of 16 in 1875. He entered Presidency College, Calcutta. He could not complete his college education because his father disinherited him for having joined Brahmo Samaj. Soon after leaving the college, he joined as a Headmaster, first at the Cuttack

Academy, then at the National School in Sylhet and finally at a school in Bangalore. Both as a teacher and as a journalist he made a great mark right from the beginning of his career.

He joined the Indian National Congress in 1886 and left it after the split in the Congress at the Surat session in 1907. He rejoined the Indian National Congress in 1916 at the Lucknow session and left it again in 1921. Thrice he visited England, in 1896, 1908 and 1919. The most important event in Bipin Chandra Pal's life was his refusal to give evidence against Arbindo Gosh in a sedition case against him in 1907 for which he suffered rigorous imprisonment for six months. But this made him a national hero. His last days were passed in poverty. He died on May 20, 1932, a sad and disenchanted man.

On August 12, 1901, Bipin Chandra Pal started an English Weekly called 'New India'. In its inaugural issue, as founder-editor, Pal declared its ideals in stirring tones: 'Its stand point is intensely national in spirit, breathing the deepest veneration for the spiritual, moral and intellectual achievements of Indian civilization and distinctly universal in aspiration'. 'New India' focussed primarily on the economic and educational reconstruction of India with special emphasis on cultural regeneration rather than lopsided political agitation alone.

When the British Government announced their plan of partition of Bengal in December 1903, it was Bipin Chandra Pal who constructed the revolutionary political philosophy of Young Bengal and succeeded in annexing Madras or South India to that revolutionary creed. It is not therefore surprising that early Tamil Revolutionary Nationalists like Maha Kavi Bharathi, Va. Ve. Su. Iyer, Subramaniya Siva, and Va. Vu. Chidambaram Pillai and many others came under the revolutionary spell of Bipin Chandra Pal in the first decade of 20th century.

The 'Swadeshi Movement' in Bengal heralded a new Age in our national history. Swadeshi was instantly identified as the highest form of patriotism and 'Swadeshism' became the cradle of New India. It was an intensely spiritual movement and aimed at the emancipation of India in every sense, of every Indian. With fervent national calls for the boycott of British goods, schools, courts and administration came stirring appeals for embracing



'Swadeshi' in all spheres of life?indigenous manufactures, national education, language, literature and above all 'Swaraj' or political freedom became the life breath of the nation.

The Swadeshi Movement was not just a political movement or an economic movement. It was a movement for total emancipation of every Indian in all walks of life?political, economic, social, cultural and above all spiritual. The nation would not from the very beginning have raised the cry of 'BANDE MATARAM' all the way in that context and in that connection and thrown itself into the 'Swadeshi Movement' with such feverish energy, passion, impetuosity and vigorous enthusiasm if that movement had not embraced all aspects of national life. In every sense of the word it was 'A Total Revolution'?the kind of revolution which Jayaprakash Narain wanted to create after the imposition of emergency by Indira Gandhi in 1975. 'Bande Mataram' was on the lips of every revolutionary and every freedom fighter after the partition of Bengal. 'Swadeshi', 'British Boycott' and 'Bande Mataram' all became vital, vigorous and vibrant inter-changeable watchwords of all freedom fighters in India.

Bipin Chandra Pal was among the first to vigorously articulate the new philosophy of organized resistance to British rule. On the first anniversary of the 'Swadeshi Movement' and 'Boycott Movement' in 1906, Bipin Chandra Pal with a modest capital of Rs.500/-took the bold decision to launch an English Daily, 'Bande Mataram' which was to create a special niche for itself in the history of our freedom movement. Bipin Chandra Pal invited Arbindo Ghoshe to join the Editorial team of 'Bande Mataram'. Arbindo Gosh readily accepted. 'Bande Mataram' now could boast of a highly talented editorial team with Bipin Chandra Pal as Editor, Arbindo Gosh as Assistant Editor and Hemnendra Prasad Ghoshe, Shyam Sundar Chakravarthi and Bijoy Chatterjee as Assistants. Thus was started the unique political partnership of Bipin Chandra Pal and Arbindo Ghoshe. Arbindo Ghoshe was a powerful writer and master of the written word. He preferred to work behind the scenes. Bipin Chandra Pal on the other hand was a powerful orator and loved to be on stage amidst the people. Both these outstanding leaders understood and complemented each other.

In an article in 'Bande Mataram' dated September 18, 1906, he wrote: 'If we may not oppose physical force by physical force, we may yet make the administration in India absolutely impossible any day. ? ? Our ideal is freedom, which means absence of all foreign control. Our method is passive resistance which means an organized determination to refuse to render any voluntary and honorary service to the Government'.

Writing in the same journal in the same vein in April 1907, Arbindo Ghoshe elaborated: 'The struggle with the Government may take two forms?violent and non-violent. Wresting our demands from the Government by use of force and causing harm or damage is violent resistance. Refraining from helping the Government in every way is passive resistance. To create a deadlock in the administration by passive resistance was the programme of work of the extremists'.

At the Calcutta session of the Indian national Congress held in December 1906, Ambika Charan Majumdar moved the Congress Resolution supporting Boycott and Swadeshi and Bipin Chandra Pal seconded it. In a fiery speech Bipin Chandra Pal said: 'You will have observed the word 'Boycott' attached to the word 'Movement'. It means that it shall move, move from point to point, move from city to city, move from division to division, move from Province to Province till we realise the highest destiny of our people as a nation in the comity of nations?I mean 'Swaraj'.'

Bipin Chandra Pal literally and figuratively carried the message of Boycott Movement and Swadeshi Movement from Province to Province. In January 1907, he set out on a long tour of the new Province of East Bengal besides Allahabad and Benares in the United Provinces, Cuttack in Orissa, Visakapattinam, Vizayanagaram, Kakkinada, Rajamundry in present Andhra Pradesh and lastly Madras City. His passionate eloquence and oratory moved multitudes.

Bipin Chandra Pal delivered five lectures on the Madras Beach from May 2, 1907 to May 9, 1907 wherein he expounded the philosophy, goal, programme and strategy of the national movement in considerable detail. Maha Kavi Bharathi, Subrbamania Siva, and Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri attended all these lectures on the Madras Beach.



Rt Hon Srinivasa Sastri has recorded his impressions of Bipin Chandra Pal: 'Babu Bipin Chandra Pal burst into full fame in Madras as a preacher of the new political creed. For several days on the sands of the Beach, he spoke words hot with emotion and subtle logic, which were wafted by the soft evening breeze to tens of thousands of listeners invading their whole souls and setting them aflame with the fever of a wild consuming desire. Oratory had never dreamed of such triumphs in India; the power of the spoken words had never been demonstrated on such a scale'.

Bengal of the glorious days of Surendranath Banerjea, Bunkim Chandra Chatterjee, Arbindo Ghoshe, Bipin Chandra Pal and Rabindranath Tagore has been buried fathoms deep by a vicious and criminal four-fold combination of menaces of what I call 'Macaulayism', 'Marxism', 'Muslimism' and 'Missionaryism' today. If Rabindranath Tagore were to come back to life in today's seemingly spiritually and culturally dead Bengal, I can only imagine, he would cry out only the following words in desperation:

*Where the mind is full of fear*
*And the head is held low*
*Where knowledge is costly*
*And the world has been broken up*
*Into fragments by narrow domestic walls*
*Where words come out from the depths of diabolic untruth*
*Where tireless striving stretches its arms*
*Towards transcendental destruction*
*Where the turgid waters of Communist unreason*
*Have completely swamped the tiny islands*
*Of enlightened humanist reason*
*Where the mind is led forward*
*By thee into never ending vistas*
*Of thoughtless Stalinist action*
*Or actionless Leninistic thought*
*Into that hell of 21st century Maoist Bengal*
*My father*
*Let not Let not Let not*
*My beloved Bengal of 21st century arise!*

**1858 TO 1932**

With the other two members-Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak-from the Lal Bal Pal team, Bipin Chandra Pal doled out a number of extremist measures like boycotting goods made by British, burning Western clothes and lockouts in the British owned businesses and industrial concerns to get their message across to the foreign rulers of India.

Bipin Chandra Pal was a teacher, journalist, orator, writer and librarian. But above all, he was the one of the three famous leaders called "Lal Bal Pal" who comprised the extremist wing of the Indian National Congress. It was these three leaders who started the first popular upsurge against British colonial policy in the 1905 partition of Bengal. This was before Mahatma Gandhi had entered the fray of Indian politics. Bipin Chandra Pal recognized the positive outcome of the British kingdom, but at the same time upheld India's federal idea.

Read on about the biography of Bipin Chandra Pal, who was born on 7 November 1858 into a wealthy Hindu family at Habiganj, which is now in Bangladesh. He was a staunch radical in both public and private life. He was also among the first who openly rebuked Mahatma Gandhi and his followers because they sought to reinstate the current government with no government or by the priestly tyranny of Gandhiji. It was, however, his coalition with pan-Islamism during Khilafat movement due to which he was cast off from the Congress till his death in 1932.

With the other two members-Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak-from the Lal Bal Pal team, Bipin Chandra Pal doled out a number of extremist measures like boycotting goods made by British, burning Western clothes and lockouts in the British owned businesses and industrial concerns to get their message across to the foreign rulers. Later on during the course of his life history, Bipin Chandra Pal came in contact with prominent Bengali leaders like Keshab Chandra Sen and Sibnath Sastri, but not as one looking for a teacher for guidance. Pal died in the year 1932.

The title is a good alliteration, but it is unique in other respects also. Vanchi is the solitary martyr in the South and his action itself



was somewhat different. It was limited to the railway station of Tinnevelly (Tirunelvelli) Station in broad daylight. The victim was clearly visible changing from one train to another along with his wife. Mr. Robert William D'escourt Ashe, the victim, was the embodiment of official oppression in the area from as early as 1908. Vanchi was a clerk in the Forest Department of Travancore. His only associate in the action was Shankar Krishna Iyer, his Brother-in-law.

As the Sedition Committee clearly mentioned; "we do not consider that there was any indigenous revolutionary movement in Madras. But for the influence of Bipin Chandra Pal and the revolutionaries plotting in Paris and Pondicherry, there would have been no trouble in South India". It will be an interesting information to know something about the personal life of Vanchi, who rose from obscurity and passed into immortality as the only martyr from the South of Vindhyas. He was born in a small village, Shenkittai, in 1886. His father was V. Raghupati Aiyer and mother, Rukmini. He started his own life as a clerk and was married to Pannamal who expired in 1967. The only surviving member of the obscure village is one R. Gopalakrishna Iyer who lives in Tinnevelly (Tamilnadu). He is now aged about 90 years.

It would be better to start with Bipin Chandra Pal who had a powerful political influence on Vanchi. As early as 1907, Bipin Chandra Pal, called the "Lion of Swaraj" in the South, delivered a series of lectures in various places in the area. They were highly spirited and inspiring. His three lectures in the city of Madras (now called Chennai), on Swaraj, Swadeshi, and Boycott, culminated in incising the youth to violent anti-government actions.

On 10th May he was to have addressed a meeting in Madras but the organisers learnt about the arrest of Lala Lajpat Rai (of the famous Lal-Bal-Pal) in the North. They whisked him away to Calcutta (Kolkata now) for safety. But on the Kali Pooja Day (early revolutionaries were devotees of Kali, the goddess of prowess) he completed the stirring speech for the youth of Madras. He enjoined them to appease the great goddess, Kali, with the sacrifice of 108 ' white goats' (meaning white men).

A South Indian Chidambaram Pillai had accompanied Bipin Pal to Calcutta. He was already initiated into the revolutionary

movement by Dr. Tarakhnath Das when he was hiding as Tarak Bhramachari in Pillai's house before the latter left for Japan, on a voluntary exile. On Pillai returning to Madras, he openly propagated t he Cult of the Bombs with the sole purpose of driving the Britishers out. Alarmed at this open call to armed action by the Indian patriots, the Govt. arrested him along with Subramanium Siva on the 12th March, 1911. A reign of terror was let loose on the people of Tinnevelly. But oppression is never known to have suppressed revolutionary actions. The Collector's Court, Police Barracks were ransacked and set on fire. Only the army could restore order.

Two more revolutionaries of Madras, Neelakantha Brahmachari and Shankar Krishna Iyer were preaching the cult of armed revolution from place to place. The youth of the South had a new militant spirit instilled in them. Shankar's brother-in-law, Vanchi, joined them. And by December, 1910, V.V.S. Iyer, arrived from Paris to Pondicherry and immediately started training a few young men there for revolutionary action. Vanchi took his revolver practice from Iyer. He was on 3 months' leave from the office form January 1911. He belonged to Bharat Mata Association, a revolutionary organisation. In one of the meetings Vanchi publicly held the Britishers responsible for all the ills in India, plague, famine, poverty and ignorance.

This was the background of the daring action of Vanchi on the 17th June 1911. Ashe had been the Collector of Tinnevelly Dist. He had suppressed the disturbance of 1908 with utmost brutality. By his other acts of omissions and commissions, he had already earned the notoriety to head the list of revolutionary revenge in South India. Vanchi Iyer and a few others in Pondicherry, along with the new arrival from Europe, V.V.S. Iyer, planned the riddance of Ashe.

Vanchi returned to Tinnevelly and closely shadowed the target. The original intention was to kill him on 11th June 1911, synchronising with the Coronation of George the V. But Ashe was no where to be seen on that day. He thus escaped death but just by a week. The fateful day arrived on 17th June, 1911. Ashe and his wife were out on official tour and were at Manyanchi station to change for Kodai Kanal. But at Manyanchi one 'V-Anchi arrived.



He was accompanied by his brother-in-law, Shankar. It was 11 a.m. The collector and his wife changed over to the other train. Within a few minutes Ashe was attacked by Vanchi. The injured officer was brought back to Tinnevelly for treatment. But the tyrant of the district succumbed to the injuries.

There was commotion, confusion and consternation all over. Vanchi waited for a few minutes to see if his bullet had done the job. People around tried to over-power him but failed against the fear of the loaded revolver. Vanchi managed to go to the end of the platform just to shoot himself with his own revolver through the throat. The long hand of law was cut short and could not catch the Collector's assassin. He became a martyr, the solitary one in the South.

It is pertinent, also inspiring, to quote from Madame Cama in her Vande Mataram of July 1911. She wrote:

> *"When decorated slaves from Hindustan were parading the streets of London as performers in a Royal Circus (a ref. to King George's Coranation) and demonstrated their subservience to the King of England, two young and brave countrymen of ours proved by daring deed that Hindustan is not slumbering. The shots that Vanchi fired did help arouse a slave nation from the century-old slumbering." Let Independent India remember them with reverence. That is the least we can do. Unfortunately we are not doing it.*

Sri Aurobindo rose like a meteor in India's political firmament for a while from 1906 to 1910 and then disappeared into the realm of spirituality in Pondicherry. But during the brief period of his political activity, he left an indelible mark on the freedom movement. He became a guru of the Revolutionaries and encouraged them to do daring deeds. Through his powerful writings in 'Bande Mataram' and his innumerable public speeches, Sri Aurobindo directed the activities of the Nationalists not only in Bengal but, throughout the country.

In 1905, at the Benares session of the Indian National Congress, Smt. Sarala Devi Chaudharani, a niece of Rabindranath Tagore sang the 'Vande Mataram Song', despite the ban imposed on its singing by the British government. It was a hymn of love of

Motherland sublimated into an ecstatic devotion to the DIVINE MOTHER BHARAT. In that exalted vision of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838-1894), the composer of this great national song, was manifest the trinity of Saraswathi (The Goddess of Knowledge and Culture), Lakshmi (The Goddess of Beauty and Wealth), and Durga (The Goddess of Strength and Energy). 'Vande Mataram' became the national battle cry for freedom from British Rule and Oppression during the Freedom Movement. In 1905, the Freedom Movement had taken an organized shape and in the same year our national politics took a new revolutionary turn with the announcement of Swadeshi Movement on 7 August 1905 at Calcutta.

The partition of Bengal was announced by Lord Curzon (1859-1925), the then Viceroy of India, on 16th October, 1905 in the teeth of opposition of all Bengalis to the whole scheme of partition. The Nation as a whole was galvanized into a violent mood and extremist groups, not only in Bengal but the rest of India, came into the open to spearhead the nationalist movement. At the suggestion of his brother Barindra Ghose, Sri Aurobindo started a paper, 'Yugantar', which preached open revolt and absolute denial of the British Rule and included such items as a series of articles containing detailed instructions in guerilla warfare.

The times were indeed feverish. The hegemony of the British establishment had to be challenged. Education had to play a new role in this changed scenario. It had to become a new form of resistance through which the emergent nationalist spirit could be propagated. With this national objective in mind the National Council of Education (NCE) came into being in 1906. Sir Rash Behari Ghosh became the first President of NCE. The other members of this Council were Subodh Chandra Mallik, Brajendra Kishore Roychowdhury, Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo. They established the Bengal National College on 14th August, 1906. Its primary aim was to impart education?literary, scientific and technical?on national lines exclusively under national control. Its sole aim was to achieve self-reliance through education. Sri Aurobindo resigned the teaching post which he was holding at Baroda on a monthly salary of Rs 750 in order to serve as the first



Principal of the newly founded Bengal National College on a monthly salary of Rs.75/-. He was ably assisted by Satis Chandra Mukherjee, who devoted his life to the cause of national education. Though Satis Chandra Mukherjee was nominally the Superintendent of the National College, yet really the heart and soul of the institution was Sri Aurobindo. From now on for nearly four years till 31 March, 1910 when he left Chandernagore for Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo was the main spirit behind the Revolutionary Movement in Bengal and the rest of India.

In March, 1906, a peoples' organisation called the Barisal Parishad was created to fight against the Partition of Bengal. A big Provincial Conference was held at Barisal in March 1906. The rising star of the new Age, Sri Aurobindo was to adorn this Conference. The Government took advance action to ban the singing of Vande Mataram Song at this Conference. The delegates were furious at the ban and they decided to defy it. A massive public procession chanting 'Vande Mataram' was organized to march through the city of Barisal. Surendra Nath Banerjee (1848-1925), a veteran leader was leading the vanguard of this huge procession. The Police let loose violence through a lathi charge against all who participated in that procession. The procession was broken up by the Police. Thousands were injured. Many historians have viewed this episode as a precursor to the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre of April, 1919. After participating at the broken up Provincial Conference at Barisal in 1906, Sri Aurobindo toured the whole of East Bengal along with Bepin Chandra Pal (1858-1932) and both of them gave rousing and inspiring anti-British speeches, calling upon the people of Bengal to rise in armed revolt against the British Rule in India.

In August 1906, Bepin Chandra Pal founded the 'Bande Mataram', a Nationalist Daily. Sri Aurobindo was intimately associated with it, and soon virtually, though not in name, became its editor. 'Bande Mataram' became the organ of New Nationalism of the extremist party forged ahead by the forward group of young men under the proclaimed leadership of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856 ? 1920). Sri Aurobindo became his second in command in this nationwide extremist movement. Besides Sri Aurobindo and Bipin Chandra Paul, some other very able writers

like Shyam Sunder Chakravarti, Hemendra Prasad Gosh and Bejoy Chatterjee were on the staff of 'Bande Mataram'. The creation of 'Bande Mataram' daily was indeed unique in journalistic history, unique in the radical influence it played in converting the mind of a people and preparing it for armed revolution. Historically it is very important to note that almost simultaneously, Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928), the Lion of the Punjab, also started a journal called 'Vande Mataram' from Lahore in 1906

Referring to the revolutionary impact of 'Bande Mataram'and the catalytic role played by Sri Aurobindo in that process, Bipin Chandra Pal, the founder of the daily wrote as follows: ?A new paper was started. Aravinda ( Sri Aurobindo )was invited to join its staff. A joint-stock company was shortly floated to run it, and Aravinda became one of the directors. This paper ? ?Bande Mataram? ? at once secured for itself a recognized position in Indian journalism. The hand of the master was in it, from the very beginning. Its bold attitude, its vigorous thinking, its clear ideas, its chaste and powerful diction, its scorching sarcasm and refined witticism, were unsurpassed by any journal in the country, either Indian or Anglo-Indian. It at once raised the tone of every Bengali paper, and compelled the admiration of even hostile Anglo-Indian editors. Morning after morning, not only Calcutta but the educated community almost in every part of the country, eagerly awaited its vigorous pronouncements on the stirring question of the day. It even forced itself upon the notice of the callous and self-centred British press. Long extracts from it commenced to be reproduced week after week even in the exclusive columns of the ?Times? in London. It was a force in the country which none dared to ignore, however much they might fear or hate it, and Aravinda was the leading spirit, the central figure, in the new journal. The opportunities that were denied to him in the Bengal National College he found in the pages of the ?Bande Mataram,? and from a tutor of a few youths in that College he thus became the teacher of a whole nation?.

Sri Aurobindo's articles in 'Bande Mataram' were emitting fire and fury against the British Government all the time. On 8 June, 1907, the Government issued a formal warning to the Editor of the 'Bande Mataram' ?for using language which is a direct



incentive to violence and lawlessness?. The Government started a campaign of repression against newspapers in Bengal and the rest of India in July 1907 and on 30 July, 1907, the Bande Mataram Office was raided by the Police. Sri Aurobindo was charged with sedition in August 1907. But as no evidence was forthcoming that he was the editor of the newspaper, he was acquitted, though the printer was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment. There was an interesting episode in connection with this trial. Bipin Chandra Pal, the great revolutionary leader and an intimate associate of Sri Aurobindo, was called by the Government as a prosecution witness in the case to prove Sri Aurobindo's editorial association with 'Bande Mataram'. Everyone knew that Sri Aurobindo was the heart and soul of the paper and no one knew it better than Bipin Chandra Pal and yet he was unwilling either to tell a lie in open court or to harm Sri Aurobindo in any way. He refused to give evidence, as in his opinion the prosecution case was injurious to the larger interests of the country at that time. Therefore Bipin Chandra Pal cheerfully offered to accept the prescribed penalty for his conduct and was duly sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment.

Sri Aurobindo told Satis Chandra Mukherjee that he might be taken away to Prison at any moment and that his continued association with the Bengal National College might cause great damage to the institution. Sri Aurobindo resigned from the Bengal National College on 23 August, 1907. We get a glimpse of his agitated but very clear mind from the following extract of his reply to the farewell address given him by the students of the Bengal National College on 23 August, 1907: ?There are times in a nation's history when Providence places before it one work, one aim, to which everything else, however high and noble in itself, has to be sacrificed. Such a time have now arrived for our Motherland when nothing is dearer than her service, when everything else is to be directed to that end.... Work that she may prosper. Suffer that she may rejoice. All is contained in that one single advice.?

## PARTITION OF BENGAL AND ANTI PARTITION MOVEMENT

Lord Curzon was send to India in 1899 as Viceroy with the firm objective of strengthening the foundations of British rule. He

liked the highest standards of administrative efficiency in the Government and he came to India with the determination to overhaul the whole framework of Indian administration.

The province of Bengal had, over the years, become large and unwieldy. It embraced Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Chhota Nagpur with its hilly tracts and certain other tributary states. By the beginning of the 20th century, it extended over an area of 189,000 square miles or 489,500 sq. km. with a population of over 78 million people. Curzon, in 1902, had written, "Bengal is ungovernably too large a charge for any single man" and therefore wanted a division of the province and proposed it.

Curzon's proposals for the partition of Bengal received Royal assent on September 1, 1905. Accordingly, a new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam was constituted by amalgamating Assam and Chittagong with fifteen districts of old Bengal. The new province was to have an area of about 1,06,000 sq. miles or 2,74,540 sq. km. and a population of about 31 million.

## MOTIVES IN THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

Administrative expediency was the reason given out by the British rulers for the partition of Bengali But the nationalist leaders believed that the scheme aimed at thwarting the growing national solidarity. Their views are amply borne out by an official noting dated 4th December, 1904 of Risley, Secretary to the Government of India. It reads, "Bengal united is a power. Bengal divided will pull in several different ways," Lord Curzon himself observed in one of his minutes, "there remains an argument to which the incoming Lt. governor of Bengal, Sir A. Fraser attaches the utmost weight and which cannot be absent from our consideration. He has represented to me that the advantage of severing these Eastern Districts of Bengal which are a hot-bed of purely Bengali movement, unfriendly if not seditious in character and dominating the whole tone of Bengal administration, will immeasurably outweigh any possible drawbacks"! Thus the real motive for the partition was to weaken the unity of the Bengalis.

The second motive was that of placating the Muslims and creating a solid Muslim block against the Hindus in respect of political views. Lord Curzon in his speech at Dacca said, "With partition, Dacca would become the capital of the new Muslim majority province which would invest the Mohammedans in Eastern Bengal with a unity which they have not enjoyed since the days of the old Mussalman viceroys and kings."



## ANTI-PARTITION MOVEMENT

The proposals for the partition were publicly known in December 1903. The Indian nationalists were quick to see the designs behind the proposals and condemned it unanimously here were unprecedented protests against the proposals. The nationalist leaders launched a powerful press campaign against the proposals in the Bengali, the Hitabadiand the Sanjibani. Petitions signed by as many as 70,000 people were submitted to the Government. But the Government remained unmoved and the decision to partition Bengal was announced on July 19,1905.

The nationalists realised that constitutional methods were not going to prove effective. A large number of protest meetings were held in the different towns of Bengal. The formal proclamation of Swadeshi movement was made on 7th August, 1905 in a meeting held at the Calcutta Town Hall. It also passed the famous Boycott Resolution, But the British government, unmindful of the reaction of the Indian masses, announced on September 1, 1905 that the partition was to be effected on October 16, 1905 and it came into effect on that date. The nationalists responded by observing this day as the day of mourning and fasting. People marched through the streets of Calcutta barefooted renting the air by the slogan 'Bande Mataram', which later became the anthem of the national movement. People tied 'Rakhis' to each other to demonstrate the indestructible unity of the two Bengals. In the afternoon, the veteran nationalist leader Ananda Mohan Bose laid the foundation of a Federation Hall at Calcutta. He addressed a massive gathering of over 50,000 and a resolution was passed by the people pledging to do their utmost to maintain the unity of Bengal. A resolution to launch the Swadeshi movement was also adopted.

## IMPACT OF THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

'Swadeshi' literally meaning 'of one's own country', aimed at the promotion of indigenous industries for strengthening the

nation! In the words of Lala Lajpat Rai, "The Swadeshi movement ought to make us self-respecting, self-reliant, self-supporting and last but not least, manly. The Swadeshi movement ought to teach us how to organise our capital, our resources, our labour, our energies, our talents, for the greatest good of all Indians". The promotion of Swadeshi was accompanied by the advocacy of the boycott of foreign goods. It aimed at arousing national sentiments of the people. To Tilak, Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh, boycott had many implications. It was an economic pressure on Manchester, a weapon of political agitation against imperialism and a training in self-sufficiency for the attainment of Swaraj.

This movement started first of all in Bengal. Mass meetings were held all over Bengal where use of Indian goods and boycott of British goods were proclaimed and pledged. At many places public burnings of foreign cloth were organised; Shops selling foreign cloth were picketed. According to Surendra Nath Banerji, "Swadeshi movement during the days of its potency changed the entire texture of our social and domestic life". Marriage presents that included foreign goods, the like of which could be manufactured at home, were returned. Priests would often decline to officiate at ceremonies where foreign articles were offered as oblations to the gods. Guests would refuse to participate in festivities where foreign salt or foreign sugar was used.

The Swadeshi movement was a great success. All sections of the society rose as one in the anti-partition movement. Students of Bengal played a prominent part in the movement. The traditionally home-centred women of the urban middle classes joined the movement in a big way. Surendranath Banerjee, RabindranathTagore, Satish Chandra Mukherjee, Moti Lal Ghosh, Ananda Mohan Bose, Romesh Chandra Dutta, Bipin Chandra Pal, Ashvini Kumar Dutta, Ambika Charan Mazumdar and K.K. Mitra were some of the prominent leaders of the anti-partition movement. The principal organisations that took part were the Dawn Society Bande Mataram Sampradaya, the Anti-Circular Society and the Swadeshi Samaj.

The message of Swadeshi and boycott of foreign goods soon spread to the rest of the country. Lokmanya Tilak popularised the movement in Poona and Bombay. Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh



spearheaded the Swadeshi and boycott movements in Punjab and other parts of northern India. Syed Haider Raza led the movement in Delhi and Chidambaram Pillai in Madras presidency. Bipin Chandra Pal's extensive tour helped to galvanize the movement in southern India. The leadership of the anti-partition movement soon passed into the hands of those leaders who were later called the Extremists. They saw the futility of constitutional means and advocated passive resistance in addition to 'Swadeshi' and 'Boycott'. Some nationalist leaders believed in extending the boycott to include boycott of government schools and colleges, courts, titles and government services and even of organising strikes. The aim was to make the administration under the conditions then present impossible by an organised refusal to do anything which could help either the British Commerce in the exploitation of the country or the British officialdom in the administration of it. Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak were the leaders of this faction of the national leadership. But the moderates, by and large, were not as yet willing to go that far.

## ATTITUDE OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

In the beginning, the British rulers played down the anti-partition movement. But when it became, virulent, the policy changed. The government resorted to repressive measures. It started patronizing the Muslim League placating the moderates and repressing the extremist leaders. The militant nationalists were meted out severe sentences and even deportation on flimsy grounds.

### Significance of the Anti-Partition and the Swadeshi Movements

The anti-partition movement marked a great epoch in the history of the national movement in India. It aided in crystallizing the national sentiment. It became a great movement which agitated the minds of all the Indians was able to draw for the first time large sections of society into active participation in nationalist politics and still larger sections into the ambit of modern political ideas. It led to the outburst of revolutionary activity in the two Bengals, and to suppress it, the government resorted to a vast array of more repressive measures. Thus it extended the social base of the national movement. No wonder, the partition had to

be annulled in 1911. The movement gave a stimulus to the growth of indigenous industries and crafts in India. Swadeshi factories came into existence everywhere. The period witnessed the growth of Swadeshi textile mills, soap and match factories, tanneries, banks, insurance companies, shops, etc. The Bengal Chemicals Factory of Acharya P.C. Ray became quite successful and famous.

The Swadeshi movement made a deep impact in the cultural sphere. The songs composed by Rabindranath Tagore, Rajani Kanta Sen and Syed Abu Mohammad became the moving spirits for nationalists of all hues. Rabindranath's 'Amar Sonar Bangla' written during that time was adopted by Bangladesh as its national anthem on its liberation in 1971. The Swadeshi influence could be seen in Bengali folk music, science and art too. The most serious casualty of Bengal's partition was the unity of the Indian National Congress. The disagreements over agitational methods in Bengal led to the division of the Congress into two factions-the Moderates and the Extremists. That brought them to a clash at Surat in December, 1 907. Eventually, the extremists were excluded from the Congress for about a decade.

### CAUSES OF FAILURE

The Swadeshi movement, despite its popular mass character, gradually petered out by mid 1908. This was due to several reasons. Firstly, the repressive policy of the colonial state crushed the movement. Secondly, the internal squabbles among the nationalist leaders undermined the potency of the movement. Thirdly, the movement was left leaderless owing to large scale deportation of its prominent leaders. Between 1907 and 1908, nine major leaders of the movement were deported. Tilak was given a sentence of six years imprisonment, and Ajit Singh and Lala Lajpat Rai were arrested and deported to Mandalay in Burma (Myanmar). Chidambaram Pillai and Harisarvottam Rao from Madras and Andhra were also arrested. Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh retired from politics. Fourthly, the Swadeshi movement lacked an effective organisation and party structure. Though the Swadeshi movement failed to achieve its immediate objectives, it became the first round in the popular national struggle against colonialism and bequeathed a legacy on which the later national movement was to draw heavily.



The mood of post-independent India was that of turmoil. The country was divided along religious lines. There were attempts from all quarters to make India a nation with religious basis. Venomous slogans were in the air, from all corners. It was not patriotism that created this vile mood. It was really the product of hypocritical shallowness, and utter selfishness. What was being dished out as patriotism was narrow nationalism and extreme veneration of religious leaders.

There were deliberate attempts to segregate the citizens on the basis of religions. Destructive ideologies were in the rhetoric everywhere. V.D. Savarkar's book 'Essentials of Hindutva' was the centre point of this ideology. It was proposing a nationalism of the elite class. Similar motives can be seen in the formation of R.S.S by Kasav Balaram Hedgewar in 1925.

These extremely absurd theories were to create endless miseries in India. The already splintered nation was again made the prey to such shameless scheming. The natural agitation that erupted from such things was playground of persons with extreme and disintegrative ideologies. These programs had the un-doubtable failing that they failed to encourage a united India. What was proposed at was polarisation of the people. The pride that Indian should carry with them is the unique heritage of a nation varied culture.

The vile proposal was that India should be seen not as a nation, but as a fatherland or motherland. There was to be only one culture, not a variety of cultures, that had existed here from time immemorial. Persons who have faith in Islam, Christianity, or Communism cannot be persuaded to accept such novel inputs of certain fertile imaginations. They cannot be compelled to accept Hinduism as their own culture. India cannot be a Hindu nation, to the exclusion of other faiths.

Kushwant Singh writes: The birth of Hindu nationalism took place in Renaissance period in 1906 with the Hindu melas. The primary objective of these melas was to train young Hindu in the martial arts, the use of lathers, daggers and swords. Non-Hindus were not allowed to participate. There was Swami Dayanand Saraswathi's Arya Samaj Movement with its emphasis on Shudhi-Dayanand's objective was to re-establish the golden age of

Hinduism; he encouraged re-conversion of Muslims and Christians back to its fold. In Maharashtra, Bal Gangadhar Tilak revived Ganapati and Shivaj festivals. Every time they were celebrated, Hindu-Muslim riots broke out. At the same time in Bengal, Anusilan Samitis (disciplinary organizations) were set up to combat partition of the state. These samitis did not accept non-Hindu members. Hindu sabhas, which had initially stood for cow protection, the promotion of Hindi as a national language, and self rule, formally launched the Hindu Mahasabha in 1922. But it was only after the arrival of V.D. Savarkar as its president in 1936 that the organization assumed theory of a Hindu nation. At the core of this ideology was Savarkar's Hindutva, published in 1923. (The End of India)

Fanatics were for the formation of a Hindu nation, and Hindu spirituality. The fierceness of this mental derangement can be discerned from the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. Secularism would torpedo the social dominance of the Brahmins.

Mahatma Gandhi's political leadership disappointed the socially elite class who were in the Indian National Congress and Hindu Mahasabha. Mahatma Gandhi neutralised the attempts to create communalism among the elite class. Fascists were after the life of Mahatma ever since. They had seen the power he had on the Indian masses. He would never allow them to come to leadership.

Sri. Aurobindo, Bankim Chandra Chetterji, Tilak and Bipin Chandrapal offered a national significance to religious signs and festivals. They were of the opinion that the basis of Indian nationalism is indisputably linked to the ancient Vedic culture. The revivals of the Ganapathi worship and Shivaji festival in 1893 and 1895 were in tune with this ideology.

Bipan Chandra wrote.

*"Many extremist leaders like Aurobindo Ghose, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Raj used Hindu symbols, ideas, and myths in their political speeches and writings. India was often referred to as Mother Goddess or compared with Kali, Durga and other Hindu Goddesses. The early revolutionary terrorists swore by the Gita and Kali and some even saw in the Hindu tinge a revolutionary feature, many leaders of the anti-partition of Bengal agitation tried to give a religious colour to the boycott movement in order to popularise it among the masses" (Communalism in Modern India).*



Tilak made an attempt to turn the Hindus against Muslims during the Hindu-Muslim riot in Mumbai in 1893. He argued that Hindus are helpless. Ganesh festival was started two months after the riot. Bipin Chandrapal supported Tilak with Kali puja and Durga festival in Bengal. Tilak called these attempts as the pathway to freedom. The attempts of Tilak only led to more divisive mood entering the nation. It directly led to the formation of Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh.

Bipan Chandra Says: "Tilak too encouraged the growth of the Hindu tinge in Indian nationalism with his propagations of Ganesh Pooja and Shivaji festival with their Hindu religious overtones. It is true that Tilak's basic political propaganda and agitations were organised around political and economic issues and contained little appeal to Hinduism and certainly much less than in the case of Aurobindo Ghose and B.C. Pal and that his primary motive in organizing the festival was "to find opportunities of collecting and speaking to the masses".

Tilak was to say that he strived to glorify Shivaji, Shivaji was a popular hero in Maharashtra. (Ibid).

Similar attempts to promote Indian nationality with a Hindu hue were in full swing everywhere. Persons like Benkim Chandra Chatterjee tried hard to picture Muslims and communists as foreign nationals. Hindu revivalists like V D Savarkar and other were spreading the ideology that India was the holy land of the Hindus, and that India was a Hindu nation.

Kushwant singh observes: "Savarkar was also the first to propound the two-nation theory, referring to the Hindus and Muslims as separate nations. Other Hindu leaders who accepted this two nation theory were Dr. Moonje of the Hindu Mahasabha, Pandit Madhan Mohan Malaviya, founder of the Banaras Hindu University, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bhai Parmanand and Swami Shradhananda. The eminent Bengali writer Bankim chanra chathopadhyay also supported the notion." (The End of India).

Fanaticism was used as a weapon against the British. Yet, it was to create a deep cleave between the Hindus and Muslims. The senseless caste system was in tune with this. Caste system had itself created a terrible division in the nation. The problem that the revivalists were facing was that a great majority of the Muslims were from the lower castes. So, naturally the revivalists were to develop disregard for the Muslims.

All these vile propaganda was also getting a lot of support from certain sections of the Indian National Congress. They in their innermost heart did have a liking for a nationalism based on Hinduism. It was the halo of religious bigotry that these persons lend to the Congress party that made many Muslims to consider it as a party representing Hindu interests.

Sir Aurobindo came up with the theme of nationalism being the personification of immortal religion.. He says: "I say no longer that nationalism is a creed, a religion, a faith; I say that it is the Sanatan Dharma which for us is nationalism. This Hindu nation was born with the Sanatan Dharma, with it moves and with it grows" (Sri Aurobindo, collected works).

All these were severely causing rupture in the social fabric of India. Communal flare-ups started becoming common all over the nation. Both Muslim as well as Hindu leaders used rhetoric to ignite passion. The emotional fire that flared up caused a lot of communal riots. This became common from one end of the nation to the other; from the Himalayas to the Cape Comerin. Hindu Mahasabhas struggle against the British was tinged with a similar passion against the Muslims. They gave training in arms to the Hindu youths, ostensibly to use against the British; yet, it only could reach out to hurt their Muslim brethren, who were their own countrymen.

The antipathy was mutual. Muslim fanatics called Hindus as infidels. As a retort, the Hindu propaganda was to call for the sinking of all Muslims in the Ganges. A highly provocative editorial in the Hindu of Lahore on the 21st of October 1929 read thus: Oh, young Hindu brethren of India, alas, Where is the brave Pratap who was a terror to Emperor Akber, Where is that lion hearted Shivaji who paralysed Aurangzeb, Where is the Banda Bairagi whose sword cut the Mohammedans to pieces? Alas! Alas! Where have they all gone, where are they hidden. Both Hindus as well as Muslims turned to terrorism, all under the vague camouflage freedom struggle. It is true that Muslim terrorism also ignited Hindu emotions. Muslims also conducted attacks on Hindus. There were certain Mullas and Kwajas were very guilty in this regard. They fanned Muslim religious feelings with their oratory. The Muslim version of heritage and history was that India was the inherited property of the Muslims. This inheritance had been usurped by the British. For, it was the British who destroyed the Mogul Empire. They wanted it back.



Terrorists had their field-day. The problems multiplied. Muslim terrorism also was bad for the nation. There was a call to destroy Hindu religion by converting all lower caster Hindus into Islam, thus liberating them and in turn destroying Hindu religious majority. Every action created strong reactions.

Indian National Congress was having a bit of connection with Hindu extremism. It was a tragic development, but it was the reality. This encouraged the Muslims to keep away from Congress programs. Even Gandhi's Swaraj was not satisfying. The Hindu hue of the national movement was not acceptable to the Muslims. The undereducated section of the Muslims did not have any understanding of the concept of nationality, accustomed as they were to centuries of monarchical and feudal social systems. They were painfully at the mercy of wild passion, and inflamed reactions to what they could only perceive as outrage on their religions beliefs.

On 20th March 1909 in a letter to Atiya Begum, Iqbal wrote, "I have myself been of the view that religious differences should disappear from this country and even now I act upon this principle in my private life. But now I think that the preservation of their separate national entity is desirable both for the Hindus and the Muslims. The vision of a common nationhood for India is a beautiful ideal and has poetical appeal but looking to the present conditions and the conscious trends of two communities, it appear incapable of fulfilment"

It is in this background that Iqbal's speech should be evaluated. It is said that his speech inspired the formation of Pakistan. It was a case of an enlightened man being forced to concede to the wild

social patterns being forced on him. He was seeking a way out for the people, from their sure path to mutual destruction. He had his visions of a nation where both communities lived with each other in a scenario of mutual respect and harmony. Such a thing was what could make India proud. He did understand the religious passions do stand much far from reality. It was not a very happy theme to dream of an India divided into two nations. He wished for a united nation, where both the communities shared all the triumphs and tribulations that fate had in store. His sense of national pride is very much evident in his speeches, poetry and prose. Yet, he had a singular understanding that it was near impossible to wipe out the immensity of religious animosity that had been served to the differing sections of the people in the name of struggle for freedom. Being an intelligent man, he was aware of the realities and it was up to him to speak with purpose and responsibility. It was not his nature to speak with the false note of the rhetoricians who now were in control of all persuadable minds.

It was a moment of deep agony for him. For, now India was at the moment of reckoning, when it had to face up to what it had professed. But it was failing painfully. With all its claims to antique intelligence, all that could shown up was only religious bigotry.

A politically free people can progress. Centralised rule cannot face the issues. Especially in a nation like India, where there was an immensity of cultures, languages, multitude of creeds, and varying levels of castes. Yet, what was becoming clear was that no religion or caste or creed was willing to forgo their multitude of claims for the larger aim of promoting the nation. In fact everyone was keeping their narrow interests much above the interests of the nation. Iqbal does not propose a nation, which shall impose a Muslim rule on the citizens.

Iqbal says in his presidential address delivered at the annual session of the All India Muslim League at Allahabad on 29, December 1930: "As far as I have been able to read the Muslim mind, I have no hesitation in declaring that if the principle that the Indian Muslim is entitled to full and free development on the lines of his own culture and tradition in his own Indian home-lands is recognised as the basis of a permanent communal



settlement, he will be ready to stake his all for the freedom of India. The principle that each group is entitled to free development on its own lines is no inspired by any feeling of narrow communalism. A community which is inspired by feelings of ill-will towards other communities is low and ignoble.

I entertain the highest respect for the customs, laws, religious and social institutions of other communities. Nay, it is my duty according to the teaching of the Quran, even to defend their places of worship, if need be. Yet, I love the communal group which is the source of my life and behaviour and which has formed me what I am by giving me its religion, its literature, its thought, its culture and thereby recreating its whole past as a living operative factor in my present consciousness. Even the authors of the Nehru Report recognise the value of this higher aspect of communalism. While discussing the separation of Sind, they say: "To say from the larger view-point of nationalism that no communal provinces should be created, is in a way equivalent to saying from the still wider international view point that there should be no separate nations. Both these statements have a measure of truth in them. But the staunchest internationalist recognises that without the fullest national autonomy, it is extraordinarily difficult to create a harmonious nation.

'Communalism in its higher aspect, then, is indispensable to the formation of a harmonious whole in a country like India. The units of Indian society are not territorial as in European countries. India is a continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages and professing different religions. their behaviour is not at all determined by a common race-consciousness. Even the Hindus do not form homogeneous group. The principle of European democracy cannot be applied to India without recognising the fact of communal groups. The Muslims demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India is, therefore, perfectly justified. The resolution of the All-Parties Muslim Conference at Delhi, is to my mind wholly inspired by this noble ideal of a harmonious whole which, instead of stifling the respective individualities of its component wholes, affords them chance of fully working out the possibilities that may be latent in them. And I have no doubt that this House will emphatically endorse the

Muslim demands embodied in the resolution. Personally, I would go further than the demands embodied in it. I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India". (Thoughts and reflections of Iqbal, edited by S.A. Vahind).

Some of the critics of Iqbal may see this as a very controversial suggestion. Actually what was being proposed was a place in India, where Islamic way of life could be allowed to be practised without it disturbing other communities. It was not a proposal for partition. Actually it was finding a way away from the proposal for partition. Iqbal meant state, as understood in local parlance; he did not use the word nation.

When Iqbal's proposal reached the ears of Nehru, the term 'state' had changed to 'province'. It simply was a misinterpretation of Iqbal. What was proposed was a federal state; it was deliberately misunderstood.

In a review of the book, 'The Reconstruction of Religious thoughts in Islam', Edward Thompson delineated Iqbal as a protagonist of the Pakistan scheme, which was published in Observer of London. His presidential address also has been misinterpreted as a plan to separate India.

Iqbal wrote to Edwad Thompson on his opinion thus: 'I have just read your review of my book. It is excellent and I am grateful to you for the very kind things you have said of me. But you have made one mistake which I hasten to point out as I consider it rather serious. You call me protagonist of the scheme called 'Pakistan'. Now Pakistan is not my scheme. The one that I suggested in my address to the All India Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930 is the creation of a Muslim province; ie, a province having an overwhelming population of Muslims in the North-West India. This new province will be, according to my scheme, a part of the proposed Indian federation. The Pakistan scheme proposes a separate federation of Muslim province directly related to England as a separate dominion. This scheme originated in Cambridge. The authors of this scheme believe that our Muslim Round table members have sacrificed the Muslim nation on the altar of the Hindu or so called Indian nationalism".



Iqbal has stated here a province within Indian federation. He was not for separation and boundaries. His wish for a Muslim state in India was due to his feelings that there was no other way out from the mess India was in. Hindu representative who attended the Round Table Conference were not willing to consider legitimate Muslim concerns. This causal attitude did worry him much.

Because of all this a feeling had come upon him that a sanctuary was needed for Muslim culture inside India. Being a Muslim, he naturally was able to envisage much positive elements in Muslim culture. It seemed imperative that there was need for statutory support for the various concepts of Islam, for they were very much in variance with what was considered to be the right social stricture among Hindus.

Veer Savarkar had defined India as not a single nation, but a double nation comprising of Hindu nation and Muslim nation. This understanding is not the same as Iqbal's view. In fact, Iqbal's view was the exact opposite of Savarkar's.

Iqbal advocated the division of the nation into various states, so that the variety of languages, classes, historical heritages, religions, and cultures could be protected. In fact, Iqbal was favourably disposed to Simon Commission, which favoured maximum powers to the states. In many ways, one cannot view India from the same perspective that one view a European nation. Here the problem is not limited to the urges of provincialism alone, as one may see in a European nation. Here the variety of differences was much more. Even the Hindus were severely divided among themselves. The Engish democratic system is not a natural growth in India. Here it has to be superimposed on a variety of other things. It is in the background of these various factors that Iqbal proposed a Muslim state within India.

Actually it was not Iqbal who proposed the idea of dividing India into various states based on various factors. Around 5 years before Iqbal's Allahabad speech, Lala Lajapathrai had called for a partitioning of the nation into Hindu and Muslim nations. In the Kakkinada Congress meeting a proposal was presented to this

effect. Lajapath Rai suggested the formation of a separate state for the Muslims in the North-West. It was motivated by the continuing scenes of Hindu-Muslim conflicts. It may be remembered that Lajpath Rai, the Lion of Punjab, was the President of the Indian National Congress. It is an historical fact that he was to become the leader of the Hindu Mahasabha later.

The manner in which Lajpath Rai viewed the Hindu-Muslim problem was not in an impartial way. He had come to the tragic conclusion that a person who tended to heed the dictates of the Islamic tenets, could not live in harmony with non-Muslims.

Because of the overriding importance he would attach to the word of the Prophet and the commandments in the Quaran. At the same time, Iqbal had faith in humanism, devoid of narrow feelings of caste, class and religion. Lajpath Rai saw unity between the Hindus and Muslim as a temporary expedient to tackle the British supremacy. He was not even in favour of democracy. One may see all this in 'An advanced history of India', by R C Majumdar, H C Raichaudari and Kolikindar Dutt published by Macmillan.

Nehru Report prepared by Pandit Motilal Nehru also reflected these views. This report was in favour of separating Sindh as a independent province. Sindh was a Muslim majority state. The Muslim could only perceive unlimited levels of freedom in the hands of the Hindu as a perpetual state of slavery for the Muslims. There was real insecurity in the minds of both communities.

'There are two nations in India, Hindu and Muslim', declared Veer Savarkar in 1937 at the Hindu Mahasabha meeting held at Ahmadabad. This only reinforced Lala Lajpath Rai's contentions. This is turn created the rightful reaction in Muhammad Ali Jinnah was strove to argue for Pakistan. When presenting the Pakistan resolution, Jinnah used the views of Lala Lajapath Rai. He quoted from the letter to Chitharanjan Das, during his address. The thundering sense of narrow communal interests of the Hindu leadership was inspire Jinnah to leave his life of seclusion in London, and take up the leadership of the Muslim League. He had been a very ardent advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity. Yet, circumstances were forcing him to lead a campaign for the division of the nation.



Terrible days were to follow. There was tragedy in the offing. The flames of Muslim fanaticism and Hindu fanaticism leapt high into the skies burning down all sense of national feelings. There were many who strived hard to avoid the unstoppable events that were leading the nation to bifurcation. Maulana Azad was one such. Yet when Nehru said, as part of his usual rhetoric, 'the soul of a nation long suppressed finds utterance' in regard to these happenings, it was to make those who longed for a single nation dumb. Sardar Vallabhai Patel, the so-called Iron man of India, was among the first to favour partition. There were many good intentioned persons who argues for partition as a way out of a looming tragedy. Misconceptions, hypocrisy, falsehood, and power-hungry politicians who saw a momentous opportunity in the imminent departure of the British literally spured the mood to bring in partition.

Now to come back to Mohammad Iqbal. The well-known Pakistani historian K.K.Aziz does not recognise Iqbal as the founder of Pakistan. He says: "It is grossly misleading to call him the originator of the idea of Pakistan or the poet who dreamt of partition. He never talked of partition and his ideal was that of getting together the Muslim province in the North-West. It is one of the myths of Pakistan nation align to saddle Iqbal with the parentage of Pakistan"-The making of Pakistan-

The noted historian Tara Chand, who has written 'History of the freedom Movement in India' that Iqbal would be well remembered in modern India as a genius forever. Iqbal had no plan to divide India into two independent nations. He anticipated the unification of Punjab, North West frontier province, Sindh and Baluchistan into a state. This would have actually solved India's problem. There is no reference about two separate nations with Hindu-Muslim cultures in disharmony.

Dr. Tara Chand's words are worth quoting. "It was certainly not a scheme for partition of India into two independent sovereign state. It was only a plan for the re-distribution of territories, the province of India, in which the Muslims were a majority from the rest. He hoped that if this plan of amalgamating Punjab, North West frontier province, Sindh and Baluchistan in one autonomous region was adopted, it would solve the problem of India. There

is no reference to the two nation theory and to the incompatibility of Hindu and Muslim cultures" (History of the Freedom movement in India, Volune III, publication division New Delhi 1972).

Even Jawaharlal Nehru wrote: "Iqbal was one of the early advocates of Pakistan; and yet, he appears to have realised its inherent danger and absurdity…probably he had changed his mind or he had not given much thought to the question previously, as it had assumed no importance then. His whole outlook on life does not fit in with the subsequent developments on the idea of Pakistan or division of India". (Discovery of India)

The word Pakistan was unknown to Indian politics before 1930. While it is true that British Indian newspapers did bring more coverage to this term, Iqbal was silent about Pakistan at that time. The British government alone was in love with Pakistan. Neither Hindu nor Muslim leaders discussed the issue. They tried to strengthen their rule by separating Hindus from Muslims.

One may attribute the origin of this term to the book written by Chaudhari Rahmath Ali, a law student at Cambridge University. This book was titled: Pakistan, The Fatherland of Pak Nation absolutely. There was very much difference in what Chaudhari Rahmath Ali proposed and what Mohammad Iqbal conceived. In this book and his later booklet, 'Now or Never', Chaudhari Rahmath Ali argues for the chalking out of a separate Muslim nation. When Iqbal responded that Muslims are to be indebted to India, this nation was the part and parcel of their life, Rahmath Ali retorted furiously. He declared that Iqbal was favouring a Hindu nation.

Iqbal died in 1938. It was seen as national tragedy. All the newspapers were filled with glowing tributes to him and his intellect. There was no mention about his being a narrow communalist or the proponent of Pakistan. He was praised as a great patriot, an unequalled philosopher and as the shining star Indian Literary field.

Jawaharlal Nehru paid his profound homage to his memory thus: 'I have learned with deep sorrow of Sir Mohammad Iqbal's death only a short while ago, I had the privilege of having a long discussion with him as he lay on his sickbed and his keen intelligence and love for Indian freedom impressed me deeply.



By his death, India loses a bright star, but his great proposed will keep his memory fresh in the minds of coming generations and inspire them'. (The Hindustan Times 22, April 1938)

In the 1940 resolution presented by Jinnah, there is no reference to Iqbal. Even in the All India Muslim League meeting in Lahore, there was no mention of Iqbal. Themes that seemed to make Iqbal connected to the creation of Pakistan came only after the creation of Pakistan. It is very much clear that he had no aim for a separate nation for Muslims. What he was wanted was only a state within India where Muslims were in majority.

There are contentions that his words at times were not within the narrow boundaries of national pride. It must be remembered that he was a man of genius whose mind cannot be contained within the parameters of narrow patriotism. Maybe he could envisage the world from a global vision. Yet, there were sparks of patriotism in his poetry. He had very bad opinion of Mir Jafar of Bengal, and of Mir Sadique of Deccan. In his poetry 'The Pilgrimage to Eternity', he cast these despicable persons into the burning fires of hell. He in his songs immersed himself in the waters of the Ganges, and wrote beautiful poetry.

Even of River Cauvery he writes thus:

*'In your sweetness lie the secrets of life'.*

*The land where Chisti preached his message of truth*

*The garden where Nanak sang the song of monism*

*The land where the Arabians made their tents*

*That is my country, that is my country.*

These lines depict patriotism and national spirit like no other. There is tremendous love for India. Even his poem 'The call of the Caravan Bell' resounds with similar themes. He appeals to the people to unite to salvage a tottering India. One sees such themes in the deepest recesses of his heart. It is known that Gandhiji recited the lines in the 'The Call of the Caravan Bell' when he was incarcerated in the Yarvada Jail, and that real tears used to stream down his cheeks. He used to use this poem as an inspiring song in his political meetings.

He did say thus about this song:

*"Which heart will not throb on hearing Iqbal's Hindustan hamara? If there is one I should consider it to be a misfortune? Is the language of this song of Iqbal Hindi or Hindustani or Urdu? Who will say that this is not the national language of India, that the language is not sweet, or that it does not express highest thought? To conclude, even if I were alone to say so, I am quite clear, that ultimately, neither the Sanskritized Hindi nor the Persianized Urdu will win the race, Hindustani alone can do" (Tentulker, D.G. Mahatma volume III page 296).*

One may note with mystic feelings of reverence that it was this song that reverberated in the moments of pin drop silence that enwrapped the Clock chime at 12 Midnight, when the sovereign power was handed over to the new leaders of India. Smt. Sujatha Kripalani and Dr. Susheela Nayyar sang this song and the audience echoed in similar spirits with dreams of a glorious India in their visions:

*Sare jahnse achha*

*Hindustan hamara*

*Hum bulbule he eski*

*Yah gulistan hamara*

*Madh'hab nahi sikata*

*Apasme vair rekhna*

*Hindi he hum watan*

*Hindustan hamara*

*Of all countries in the world, Hindustan is the best,*

*It is like garden and we are its nightingales.*

*Religion does not teach us to be each other's enemy*

*All of us are Indians and India is our country.*

Pure undiluted patriotism swells in these lines. When the Poet mentions Ganges in the Himalayas, he finds that his words are not enough to bring out the surging feelings it evokes in his mood. He says that the skies are stooping to kiss the forehead of this nation at Himalayas. Indian army sings this song at their guard of honour. Indian Astronaut Rakesh Sharma sang these lines. It



was chanted when Gandhiji's ashes were immersed in River Ganges.

The new signature tune of Doordarsan created by Pandit Ravishanker is based on this poem. It was Mrs. Indira Gandhi, former Prime minister of India who insisted that the signature tune should have a nation undercurrent in it.

Iqbal's internationalism was similarly based on high values and lofty ideals. He had the understandings that nationalism had its limits, and that ultimately man has to move to global boundaries. In this, his ideas were the same as Rabindranath Tagore. It was their understanding that nationalism could cause war and hatred. Iqbal's dreams were of a freedom that went beyond the confines of national boundaries. Both he and Tagore gave messages to the people which were spiritual in nature.

Allama Rumi wrote:

*'The shop of Oneness,*

*The Ocean that has many harbours,*

*Where there is no division*

*Between man and man, or woman,*

*But only a unity of souls*

*In the process of return to their Creator,*

*Whose breath lives inside each one*

*And helps to guide us home.*

All great thinkers have changed their thought and views as they get more enlightenment. A momentary transgression from one's usual stance later is much quoted as the real stance of the thinker by persons who have vested interests. It is true that the astute Jinnah may have seen a golden opportunity in depicting Iqbal as a proponent of Pakistan and as the spiritual father of Pakistan. It was a case of person being claimed by persons as their own when he himself is not available to explain or defend his stance and views. By declaring thus, Jinnah was trying to claim the legacy of Iqbal to Pakistan and himself. It was claim which had not been rightfully bequeathed. Actually for Iqbal, Jinnah was a mere politician like many others, who saw a rare historic

opportunity burbling out in the momentous happenings that were happening all around them.

Nehru writes: "A few months before his death, as he lay on his sickbed, he set for me and I gladly obeyed the summons. As I talked to him about many things I felt that in spite of differences, how much we had in common and how easy it would be to get on with him. He was in a reminiscent mood and he wandered from one subject to another and I listened to him, talking little myself. I admired him and his poetry and it pleased me greatly to feel that he liked me and had a good opinion of me. A little before I left him, he said to me: "What is there in common between Jinnah and you? He is a politician, you are a patriot" (Discovery of India). Iqbal exists in a peculiar situation. The Hindu fundamentalists pictured him as the advocate of partition, while the Muslim fanatics forcefully claimed as their own. As for himself, his legacy lay powerless in the hands of persons who existed as the very negation of his lofty ideals.

When people suffered during the British rule, his agony was real. When he spoke for Hindu-Muslim unity, his emotions were true. When he wrote patriotic poetry, the feelings that came out were from the depths of this heart. When he spoke of revolution, it was from real revolutionary fervour burning in his heart.

In the poem 'New Temple' Iqbal says:

*Come let us yet once more*

*Lift the veil of estrangement,*

*Unite those who have parted,*

*Remove all traces of duality*

*This habitation of the heart*

*Which for so long has remained desolate,*

*Here in this land*

*Let us raise a new temple*

*Let our place of pilgrimage*

*Be higher than all the pilgrimages of the world,*

*Let us raise its pinnacle.*

*To the very edge of heaven. (Translated by Iqbal singh)*



There is feeling of unyielding searching in his poems. He was searching for an answer the misery of all mankind. He spoke to the Indians about a world without frontiers. In a certain manner, he did like the concepts of Communism. For Communism does not care for national boundaries. In that sense, Iqbal has praised it. This feeling has extended to Karl Marx. Of Marx, he has said: "He is Moses without the light, he is Christ without the crucifix and he is not a prophet though the book he has in his hand". In Javid Nama, he has described Karl Mark and Marxism thus.

The author of Capital is of the seed of Abraham. He is a prophet without since Gabriel truth lies hidden in untruth (in his book). His heart is that of a believer and mind that of a non-believer.

*The Westerners have lost the way unto Heaven*

*They seek the spirit in the belly*

The colour and ardour (of pure spirit) are not socialism believes only in the body. The religion of the prophet who does not recognise God of the body Has its basis only in an equality of belies Since true fraternity springs from the hear its root lie in the heart rather than in water and earth.

He yearned for a world without class and creed boundaries. A few months before his death, in a New Year message to the people broadcast on All India Radio, Lahore, he appeals to the people of the world to be of one single family. This was an earnest appeal.

The world's thinkers are stricken dumb. Is this going to be the end of all the progress and evolution of civilization, they ask, that men should destroy one another in mutual hatred and make human habitation impossible on this earth? Remember, man can be maintained on this earth only by honouring mankind, and this world will remain a battle ground of ferocious beasts of prey unless and until the educational forces of the world are directed to inculcating in man respect for mankind. Do you not see that the people of Spain, though they have the same common bond of one race, one cutting one another's throats and destroying their culture and civilization by their own hands owing to a difference in their economic creed? This one event shows clearly that national

unity too is not a very durable force. Only one unity is dependable, and that unity is the brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, colour or language. So long as this so-called democracy, this accursed nationalism and this degraded imperialism are not shattered, so long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God, so long as distinctions of race, colour and geographical nationalities are not wiped out completely, they will never be able to lead a happy and contented life and the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialise".

Curzon and the Partition of Bengal is now a century-old story. But Sukharanjan Sengupta has given a new dimension and a new depth to this story. It is a history of the elite Hindu-Muslim conflicts over political domination leading to the second Partition, 1947. The first partition of Bengal was annulled. It is presented as the background of the second partition of 1947. The author deals with admirable competence with the details of the political conflict between the elite Hindus and Muslims of Bengal from 1905 to 1947.

We have here rare documents as the background of the second partition. Readers and research scholars of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan will find the book immensely useful for their understanding of the politics of eastern India during the years between 1911 and 1974. Mr Sengupta visited East Bengal in December 1971 along with 30 journalists both Indian and foreign. This visit gave him an insight into the circumstances which led to the creation of Bangladesh. During the swadeshi movement of 1905, Rabindranath wrote a song praying for the unity of Bengal. That unity was achieved leading to the annulment of the Partition. But the Muslims of Bengal desired a state for themselves, when they separated from Pakistan in 1971. Communalism prevailed over Bengali patriotism in 1971 and this led to the emergence of Bangladesh.

The author's observations on the main architects of the anti-partition movement, Rabindranath, Surendranath Banerjee, Aurobindo Ghose and Bipin Chandra Pal are significant even today, except for those who have read professor Haridas and Uma Mukherjee's work on the subject. How many today remember



Bipin Chandra Pal's address to a public gathering at Calcutta on January 13, 1906, in which he said: "My boys ~ I noticed something supernatural and divine in the agitation when I heard for the first time in the compound of Pasupati Nath Bose and the Federation Hall the song of Rabindranath to the effect that the redder the eyes of the authorities, the greater will be the force of our agitation".

The words will stir our imagination today, when we feel that the Bangalees are now a fallen race. Bipin Chandra Pal collected a copy of Fuller's circular to the District Magistrate banning the Vande Mataram slogan and narrated its contents to the people of East Bengal. This led to Fuller's resignation in August 1906. Mr Sengupta says: "Bipin Babu saw in Fuller's resignation and its quick acceptance the unsettlement of Curzon's 'settled fact'." The author has very ably summed up Curzon's policy. He quotes the words of the honourable Mr Chowdhury and ex-member of the Legislative Council of Bengal: "The main object of 'the Curzon Policy' was to drive the wedge between Hindu and Mohammadan. Lord Curzon apparently took the Vambery view that India could only be held on the basis of racial animosity. He feared that a rapprochement between Hindu and Mohammadan would be fatal, for underneath the old antagonism there was developing a sort of political unity".

The author has dealt in detail with the role of Salimullah, the Nawab of Dacca in countering the anti-partition movement as the first president of the All India Muslim League in 1906, when he led a deputation to the viceroy Lord Minto asking him to protect Muslim interests particularly in Bengal. He very appropriately quotes a report of US Library of Congress on the Partition which said about the reunion of divided Bengal in 1912: "The reunion of divided Bengal was perceived by Muslims as a British accommodation to Hindu pressures". The author brings to our memory the fact "the Nawab of Bogra moved with Rabindranath, Bipin Chandra Pal and others on the streets of Calcutta for collecting money for the swadeshi and the anti partition movement. Nawab Ali Chowdhury was the Treasurer of the National Fund for the purpose. The elite Hindu-Muslim conflict over the political domination of Bengal leading to the second partition are now only a memory.

In West Bengal we are now a single united society. Lord Curzon did a great deal to sustain this conflict. Though his partition of Bengal was annulled the political conflict reappeared in 1947. East Bengal seceded from Pakistan in 1971. The Muslims did not propose a reunion with West Bengal. Instead they created Bangladesh. I think the ghost of Lord Curzon was happy to see that his idea of Muslims of East Bengal constituting a separate Muslim nation was not wrong. Mr Sengupta says: "The Muslims were also up in arms over the annulment of the partition, which they regarded as an unwarranted destruction of a great opportunity for a community that was in need of assistance". Obviously the aim was to reaffirm the spirit of Indian nationalism, then generated by the Indian National Congress. The anti-partition movement of 1905-11 was a part of the Indian National Movement led by the Congress.

Mr Sengupta has brought back to our memory the political movement against the partition. He gives an impressive picture of how the Bengalees began their agitation against the partition. "The 16th October, the day of implementation of Lord Curzon's Partition of Bengal appeared. The entire Calcutta congregated from the southern end of the Monument to the northern end of Esplanade East and Chowringhee Square with Rabindranath as the central figure. Rabindranath paraded the area with thousands of people chanting Banglar mati Banglar jal and Rakhi Bandhan with yellow thread was set in motion". In chapter 16 of the work the author very ably describes the fallout of the annulment and very aptly quotes from the US Library of Congress research paper of the subject: "The Muslim League used the occasion to declare its support for the partition of Bengal and to proclaim its mission as a political association to protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans of India".

According to the author the government of India Act, 1935, "was a whipping lesson to teach the Hindu elite of Bengal to taste the bitter fruits of the annulment of the Bengal partition and it was the annulment which dominated the political history of India leading to the Independence and the second partition of Bengal". This immensely valuable work on the partition of Bengal has very new and interesting things to say on Curzon's viceroyalty and we



are particularly grateful to its author for his observations in his epilogue. The author very appropriately quotes from Winston Churchell's memorable book Great Contemporaries: "Curzon's viceroyalty of India was his greatest period. For nearly seven years he reigned imperially over the vast Indian scene. He brought to that task intellectual powers never yet surpassed by his successors. Everything interested him, and he adorned nearly all he touched".

Those who could speak out against the British, spoke; those who could write forcefully against their oppressive policies, wrote; and those who couldn't do either fought. Bipin Chandra Pal had all these qualities-he was an outstanding orator, writer, and fearless fighter. Along with Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai, he formed the dreaded trio of Bal-Pal-and Lal. A diehard nationalist, Bipin Chandra Pal believed that Swaraj could not be had as a gift, but had to be won by sacrifice and suffering.

Bipin Chandra Pal started his life as a teacher, and worked in places as far apart as Bangalore and Lahore. He shot into limelight in 1907 because of his spellbinding speeches as a member of the Brahmo Samaj. The same year he was tried for refusing to testify against Sri Aurobindo Ghose, when the latter was charged with sedition. Rather than betray a freedom fighter and friend, Pal chose voluntary exile.

A first class writer, his association with the press was enduring. For a while he was editor of The Tribune when it was being published from Lahore He was also associated with The New India, Bande Mataram, The Swaraj, The Independent, The Democrat, and The Bengalee. Reiterating the importance of total freedom and exhorting Indians to not depend on the British for salvation, he said that we "cannot any longer suffer ourselves to be guided by them in our attempts at political progress and emancipation. Their point of view is not ours. The desire to make the Government of India popular without ceasing, in any sense, to be essentially British; we desire to make it autonomous and absolutely free of British control".

Bipin Chandra Pal believed that the national movement of India should essentially be spiritual, and to regard it as merely economic or political was to miss the point altogether What is the

use of liberating the body if the soul is still in chains. In his book The Rise of New Patriotism, he says that protest is always demoralising, unless it it followed by appropriate action.

Soon Bipin Chandra Pal's fame spread like wildfire all over India.You had to just mention his name and people would come in hordes to listen to his inspiring speeches. In the days before the arrival of loudspeakers, he could sway the masses with his faultless oratory and thundering voice. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, himself a great orator, once recalled: "Oratory had never dreamt of such triumphs in India. The power of the spoken word had never been demonstrated on such a scale." Commenting on Pal's evocative writing, Lord Aetland, Secretary of State for India, observed:"His pen played no inconsiderable part in the social and political ferment that has stirred the waters of Indian life." Sri Aurobindo regarded him as one of the mightiest prophets of nationalism.

When everything was going right for him he made a fatal move by opposing the Non-cooperation Movement. His risked popularity by saying Gandhi had magic not logic. Unfortunately for him, Gandhi's popularity was at its zenith, and this forced Pal into the backwaters of the Freedom Struggle. In the dusk of his life, he was a sad figure, eking out a living writing articles for newspapers and magazines.

The freedom movement was given a big impetus by the decision of Lord Curzon to partition Bengal. Protest meetings were held all over the country and a mass agitation was launched in Bengal. In June 1906 Sri Aurobindo took one year's leave without pay and went to Bengal to participate in the movement. In 1907 Sri Aurobindo left Baroda College and joined the newly established Bengal National College, as its principal. His salary of Rs.150/- per month was only one fifth of what he was getting in Baroda.

He had already been contributing articles to the Bengali weekly "Yugantar". Now Bipin Chandra Pal started the daily "Bande Mataram" and Sri Aurobindo soon became its chief editor, though his name was not printed, to avoid prosecution. Overnight, the paper became the organ of the Nationalist Movement and a mighty force in Indian Politics. The London Times complained that its articles reeked of sedition but were so cleverly worded that no



action could be taken. Mr. Radcliff, editor of The Statesman, said about the Bande Mataram:

*"It had a full-size sheet, was clearly printed on green paper, and was full of leading and special articles written in English with a brilliance and pungency not hitherto attained in the Indian press. It was the most effective voice of what we then called nationalist extremism".*

Bipin Chandra Pal described the role of Sri Aurobindo in the Bande Mataram:

*"Morning after morning, not only Calcutta but the educated community almost in every part of the country eagerly awaited its vigorous pronouncements on the stirring questions of the day.... It was a force in the country which none dared to ignore, however much they might fear or hate it; and Aravinda was the leading spirit, the central figure, in the new journal!"*

An attempt was made to prosecute Sri Aurobindo for sedition in July 1907, but the charges could not be proved, and he was acquitted. In the meantime differences of policy and approach were building up between the moderates and the nationalists. A historic session of the Indian National Congress was held in Surat where it split in two and the nationalists led by Sri Aurobindo and Tilak held a separate meeting. Henry Nevinson, a member of Parliament from England who happened to be present, describes his impressions of Sri Aurobindo and the scene after the split:

*"...a youngish man, I should think still under thirty. Intent dark eyes looked from his thin, clear-cut face with a gravity that seemed immovable.... Grave with intensity, careless of fate or opinion, and one of the most silent men I have known, he was of the stuff that dreamers are made of, but dreamers who will act their dreams, indifferent to means....".*

*"Grave and silent-I think without saying a single word-Mr. Aravinda Ghosh took the chair, and sat unmoved, with far-off eyes, as one who gazes at futurity. In clear, short sentences, without eloquence or passion, Mr. Tilak spoke till the stars shone out and someone kindled a lantern at his side.*

*" Sri Aurobindo, who always liked to work from behind the scene, had been pushed into the fore-front of the freedom*

*movement. He was its acknowledged leader. The whole country rang with the cry of Bande Mataram and a new spirit swept across the country. People had awakened to the need of Swaraj-complete independence-and were willing to give their lives to attain it."*

In the midst of this turmoil Sri Aurobindo met in Baroda a Maharashtrian Yogi called Vishnu Bhaskar Lele. Lele asked Sri Aurobindo to remain in seclusion for three days. He told him to sit in meditation and not to think. He would find that thoughts were not his own but came from outside and should be thrown away. Sri Aurobindo describes his experience:

*"I did not think either of questioning the truth or the possibility, I simply sat down and did it. In a moment my mind became silent as a windless air on a high mountain summit and then I saw one thought and then another coming in a concrete way from outside; I flung them away before they could enter and take hold of the brain and in three days I was free."*

### The Brahman Consciousness

In three days Sri Aurobindo had achieved the silent mind which deepened into an experience of the Brahman Consciousness. He says:

*"When I was in Bombay, from the balcony of a friend's house I saw the whole busy movement of Bombay as a picture in a cinema show, all unreal and shadowy."*

But there was a problem. Sri Aurobindo had to address a national meeting after three days. His mind had become calm and blank. How was he to give a speech? Lele told him that it did not matter. He had only to bow down to the audience as Narayana and everything would be all right. As usual Sri Aurobindo followed the directions without questioning and he found that something else spoke through him. And thus it was for the rest of his life. Everything was done from the silent Brahman Consciousness, writing, speaking or the most intense political activity.

This was another great turning point in Sri Aurobindo's spiritual life. He began listening to a Voice within and Lele told him to follow it and that he now had no need for any further instructions or an external Guru. But the Divine had a very different setting for the next major spiritual experience of Sri Aurobindo-the prison-cell of Alipore in Calcutta.



## BACK TO 'IN BENGAL'

### The Prison-Cell of Alipore

The atmosphere in Bengal was tense. The British Government had let loose repressive measures to crush all resistance. In this charged atmosphere an unsuccessful attempt was made on the life of Magistrate Kingsford. Two Bengali youths threw a bomb at his horse carriage. Immediately the police carried out raids on the Manicktolla Gardens, a family property of Sri Aurobindo, where many revolutionaries were undergoing training. Sri Aurobindo was also arrested from his house. He was imprisoned and, for a long time, kept in a small cell in solitary confinement.

Thus began one of the historic trials of the Indian freedom movement. There were 49 accused and 206 witnesses. 400 documents were filed and 5000 exhibits were produced consisting of bombs, revolvers, acid, etc. The judge C.B. Beechcroft had been a student with Sri Aurobindo at Cambridge. The Chief Prosecutor Eardley Norton kept a loaded revolver on his briefcase throughout the trial. The case for Sri Aurobindo was taken up by C. R. Das. The trial lasted for one full year. At the end C. R. Das addressed the court in these ringing words:

"My appeal to you is this, that long after the controversy will be hushed in silence, long after this turmoil, the agitation will have ceased, long after he is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism and the lover of humanity. Long after he is dead and gone, his words will be echoed and re-echoed, not only in India but across distant seas and lands. Therefore, I say that the man in his position is not only standing before the bar of this Court, but before the bar of the High Court of History."

Sri Aurobindo was found not guilty and acquitted. But this period of one year was a very important period in Sri Aurobindo's life. It was a period of intense sadhana when he had the experience of Krishna as the Immanent Divine. This is how he described the experience in a speech in Uttarpara:

*"I looked at the jail that secluded me from men and it was no longer by its high walls that I was imprisoned; no, it was Vasudeva who surrounded me. I walked under the branches of the tree in front of my cell but it was not the tree, I knew it was Vasudeva, it was Sri Krishna whom I saw standing there and holding over me His shade. I looked at the bars of my cell, the very grating that did duty for a door and again I saw Vasudeva. It was Narayana who was guarding and standing sentry over me. Or I lay on the coarse blankets that were given me for a couch and felt the arms of Sri Krishna around me, the arms of my Friend and Lover."*

Sri Aurobindo saw the same smiling Krishna in the magistrate and even the prosecuting counsel. Where was there any place for fear? When Sri Aurobindo had entered the prison he had said:

*"The agnostic was in me, the atheist was in me, the sceptic was in me and I was not absolutely sure that there was a God at all."*

But now all was changed. As Sri Aurobindo said afterwards:

*"I have spoken of a year's imprisonment. It would have been more appropriate to speak of a year's living in an ashram or a hermitage. The only result of the wrath of the British Government was that I found God."*

### India's New Mission

After his release Sri Aurobindo re-entered the political field with a new vision and purpose. India's freedom was necessary if she had to rise and be great and he declared:

*"India does not rise as other countries do, for self or when she is strong, to trample on the weak. She is rising to shed the eternal light entrusted to her over the world. India has always existed for humanity and not for herself and it is for humanity and not for herself that she must be great."*

Sri Aurobindo also started two weeklies: the 'Karmayogin' in English and the 'Dharma' in Bengali. But the air was full of rumours of an impending arrest. The view of the British Government was clearly expressed in what Lord Minto wrote about Sri Aurobindo:

*"I can only repeat that he is the most dangerous man we have to reckon with."*



### AADESH: THE INNER COMMAND

One day when Sri Aurobindo was sitting in the Karmayogin office, news was received that the Government intended to arrest him. Immediately, there was an agitated discussion all around. Sri Aurobindo sat calm and unmoving and heard a distinct voice tell him, "Go to Chandernagore". Sri Aurobindo went straight to the Ganga and boarded a boat for Chandernagore which was then a French settlement. Soon he received another `adesh' to go to Pondicherry. Sri Aurobindo remarked later:

*"I could not question. It was Sri Krishna's adesh. I had to obey. Later I found it was for the Ashram, for the Yogic work."*

Sri Aurobindo's work in the political field had come to an end. The country had awakened to the call of the Mother and freedom was assured. It was more important to see what india would do with that freedom and what man would do with his future. It was for this work that Sri Aurobindo sailed for Pondicherry to start the most important chapter of his earthly life.

Aurobindo reached Pondicherry on 4th April 1910. He was then 38 years old. He was received by several revolutionaries of Pondicherry. In fact some of them had been waiting for an Uttarayogi, a yogi from the north. They had heard the prophecy that he would come as a fugitive and practise the Poorna Yoga. He would be recognised by three statements. These statements were made by Sri Aurobindo in a letter he wrote from Baroda to his wife Mrinalini Devi on August 30, 1905 where he spoke about his "three madnesses." This letter was later found by the police and produced in court during the Alipore Bomb trial.

### Three Madnesses

*"I have three madnesses.*

*The first one is this. I firmly believe that the accomplishments, genius, higher education and learning and wealth that God has given me are His. I have a right to spend for my own purposes only what is needed for the maintenance of the family and if otherwise absolutely essential...*

*The second folly has recently taken hold of me: It is this. By whatever means I must get the direct realisation of the Lord.*

*The religion of today consists in repeating the name of God every now and then, in praying to Him in the presence of everybody and in showing people how religious one is; I do not want it. If the Divine is there, then there must be a way of experiencing His existence, of realising His presence; however hard the path, I have taken a firm resolution to follow it. Hindu dharma asserts that the path is to be found in one's own self, in one's mind. The rule that enables one to follow the path is also given to me...*

*The third folly is this: whereas others regard the country as an inert object, and know it as the plains, the fields, the forests, the mountains and rivers, I look upon my country as the mother, I worship her and adore her as the mother. What would a son do when a demon sitting on the breast of his mother is drinking her blood? Would he sit down content to take his meals, and go on enjoying himself in the company of his wife and children, or would he, rather, run to the rescue of his mother? I know I have the strength to uplift this fallen race; it is not physical strength, I am not going to fight with the sword or with the gun, but with the power of knowledge. The power of the warrior is not the only kind of force, there is also the power of Brahman which is founded on knowledge. This is not a new feeling within me, it is not of a recent origin, I was born with it, it is in my very marrow. God sent me to the earth to accomplish this great mission."*

Mrinalini passed away on December 17, 1918 in Calcutta, before she could come to Pondicherry. From 1910 for several years Sri Aurobindo lived with a few followers depending entirely on donations to maintain them. Outwardly and financially these were very difficult times. Sri Aurobindo pointed out the precarious nature of their position in a letter to Motilal Roy written half humorously but also half seriously:

*"The situation just now is that we have Rs. 1 1/2 or so in hand. Srinivasa is also without money... No doubt, God will provide, but He has contracted a bad habit of waiting till the last moment. I only hope He does not wish us to learn how to live on a minus quantity like Bharati."*



### The Mother Arrives

But the inner yoga, intense and unwavering went on unaffected by outward circumstances. For four years it was a lonely and solitary journey. His sadhana and work were still waiting for the coming of the one who was to be his true collaborator, the Mother. And she came from France in 1914. On March 29th a young French woman, Mirra Richard, came to Pondicherry with her husband Paul Richard and met Sri Aurobindo for the first time on the physical plane. One has to say on the physical plane because Mirra was far on the path of spirituality and had already been inwardly in contact with a person whom she called Krishna, and who had been helping her and guiding her.

When Mirra saw Sri Aurobindo she recognised in him the Krishna of her vision and knew that her place and work were with him in India. She wrote in her diary the next morning:

*"It matters little that there are thousands of beings plunged in the densest ignorance, He whom we saw yesterday is on earth; His presence is enough to prove that a day will come when darkness shall be transformed into light, and Thy reign shall be indeed established upon earth."*

Immediately there was a greater impetus to the movement. On August 15th 1914, the monthly Arya was launched. The Arya continued for seven years and through it Sri Aurobindo presented to the world his great spiritual vision and the path to attain it.

Nearly all the major works of Sri Aurobindo which were published later in book form-The Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga, The Human Cycle, The Ideal of Human Unity, On the Veda, The Upanishads, Essays on the Gita, The Foundations of Indian Culture, The Future Poetry-all of them first came out serially in the Arya. It was a veritable torrent which flowed, month after month, on a variety of subjects, words of surpassing depth and beauty. And none of it was thought out; it did not even pass through his mind, but flowed straight from the silent consciousness into his pen.

In 1915, with the outbreak of the First World War, the Richards had to go back to France. Mirra went to Japan in 1916 and returned to Pondicherry in 1920, never to leave.

### The Descent of the 'Overmind' Conciousness

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother believe that evolution is primarily a process of the manifestation of higher and higher levels of consciousness upon earth. As life descended into inert matter, and mind into unconscious life, so too higher levels are waiting to descend. The highest of these is the Supermind and it was the constant endeavour of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother to bring it down for a radical and permanent transformation of the earth. But before the Supermind could descend, other planes had to manifest to build the proper base. On November 24, 1926, a decisive step was taken when the Overmind, the highest of the inner planes before the Supermind, descended into the earth consciousness.

It was a momentous day. It also brought about many outward changes. Sri Aurobindo now installed Mirra as the Mother of his spiritual endeavour, his collaborator and equal, and handed over to her the responsibility of the inner and outer life of the small group of sadhaks who had gathered around him. He then withdrew into seclusion, to concentrate on the next step of his Yoga.

### The Ashram Grows

This was also the beginning of what has now grown into a spiritual community of nearly fifteen hundred persons, known as the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The Ashram grew and expanded under the Mother's guidance. Though Sri Aurobindo had withdrawn physically he continued to guide the disciples inwardly and through letters. Day after day, he sat late into the night answering their smallest queries, apparently even the most trivial, and pouring out his love and light.

### Cripp's Mission

At the same time he remained in touch with the world events and movements, shaping and moulding them with a purely inner spiritual force and action. When the Second World War broke out, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother came out openly on the side of the Allies because Hitler represented the forces of darkness. He who had fought the British earlier now put his full support and spiritual help behind them for their victory. Though Sri Aurobindo had



retired from the political scene, when the Cripps Mission came, he broke his silence and sent an emissary to ask the Indian leaders to accept the proposals. But the country was not yet ready. Sri Aurobindo knew his efforts would not succeed and yet made the attempt as "disinterested work". As he said in his usual impersonal manner:

"Well, I have done a bit of Kartavya Karma."

The passage of time revealed the great truth of what Sri Aurobindo had proposed. The late K.M. Munshi, then a senior cabinet minister in the Indian Government remarked about Sri Aurobindo:

"He saw into the heart of things.... His perception of the political situation in India was always unerring. When the World War came in 1939...it was he of the unerring eye who said that the triumph of England and France was the triumph of the divine forces over the demoniac forces.... He spoke again when Sir Stafford Cripps came with his first proposal: He said, `India should accept it.' We rejected the advice... but today we realise that if the first proposal had been accepted, there would have been no partition, no refugees, and no Kashmir problem."

August 15th 1947 saw the dawn of India's freedom. In a very significant message given on that day Sri Aurobindo spoke of his five dreams:

"Indeed, on this day I can watch almost all the world movements which I hoped to see fulfilled in my life time, though then they looked like impracticable dreams, arriving at fruition or on their way to achievement."

The first of these dreams was a revolutionary movement which would create a free and united India. India today is free but she has not achieved unity.... But by whatever means, in whatever way, the division must go; unity must and will be achieved, for it is necessary for the greatness of India's future.

Another dream was for the resurgence and liberation of the peoples of Asia and her return to her great role in the progress of human civilisation. Asia has arisen; large parts are now quite free or are at this moment being liberated: its other still subject or partly subject parts are moving through whatever struggles

towards freedom.... The third dream was a world-union forming the outer basis of a fairer, brighter and nobler life for all mankind.... A new spirit of oneness will take hold of the human race.

Another dream, the spiritual gift of India to the world has already begun. India's spirituality is entering Europe and America in an ever-increasing measure....

The final dream was a step in evolution which would raise man to a higher and larger consciousness and begin the solution of the problems which have perplexed and vexed him since he first began to think and to dream of individual perfection and a perfect society."

On December 5, 1950, at the age of 78, Sri Aurobindo left his physical body. His body was kept in State for four days and given Samadhi on December 9, 1950. Dr. P. K. Sanyal, who had attended on Sri Aurobindo during his last illness, was surprised to find that the body had not decomposed. He asked the Mother about this phenomenon. He described what happened:

*"The Mother and I had a look at Him; how wonderful, how beautiful He looked, with a golden hue. There were no signs of death as science had taught me, no evidence of the slightest discoloration, or decomposition. The Mother whispered, `As long as the supramental light does not pass away, the body will not show any signs of decomposition, and it may be a day or it may take many more days.' I whispered to Her, `Where is the light you speak of-can I not see it?' I was then kneeling by Sri Aurobindo's bed, by the Mother's feet. She smiled at me and with infinite compassion put her hand on my head. There He was-with a luminous mantle of bluish golden hue around him."*

But the dreams of Sri Aurobindo continue to become a reality. The world moves forward on the destined way. Sri Aurobindo was first and foremost a poet. And his greatest work, on which he spent his maximum love and care, was his Epic "Savitri" What he wrote there is very well applicable to himself:

*"One yet may come armoured, invincible; His will immobile meets the mobile hour; The world's blows cannot bend that victor head; Calm and sure are his steps in the growing Night; The goal recedes, he hurries not his pace, He turns not to high voices in the Night. He asks no aid from the inferior gods; His eyes are fixed on the immutable aim."*



There is perhaps no better way to end this narration of Sri Aurobindo's life than to quote the message given by the Mother, which is engraved on his Samadhi:

*"To Thee who hast been the material envelope of our Master, to Thee our infinite gratitude. Before Thee who hast done so much for us, who hast worked, struggled, suffered, hoped, endured so much, before Thee who hast willed all, attempted all, prepared, achieved all for us, before Thee we bow down and implore that we may never forget, even for a moment, all we owe to Thee."*

Khilafat Movement (1919-1924) was a Pan-Islamic movement influenced by Indian nationalism. The Ottoman Emperor Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909) had launched a Pan-Islamic programme to use his position as the Sultan-Khalifa of the global Muslim community with a view to saving his disintegrating empire from foreign attacks and to crush the nationalistic democratic movement at home. The visit of his emissary, Jamaluddin Afghani, to India in the late nineteenth century to propagate Pan-Islamic ideas received a favourable response from some Indian Muslim leaders.

These sentiments intensified early in the twentieth century with the revocation in 1911 of the 1905 PARTITION OF BENGAL, the Italian (1911) and Balkan (1911-1912) attacks on Turkey, and Great Britain's participation in the First World War (1914-18) against Turkey.

The defeat of Turkey in the First World War and the division of its territories under the Treaty of Sevres (10 August 1920) among European powers caused apprehensions in India over the Khalifa's custodianship of the Holy places of Islam. Accordingly, the Khilafat Movement was launched in September 1919 as an orthodox communal movement to protect the Turkish Khalifa and save his empire from dismemberment by Great Britain and other European powers. The Movement was initiated by the Ali brothers, Muhammad Ali and Shawkat Ali, Maulana ABUL KALAM AZAD, Dr MA Ansari, and Hasrat Mohani. Khilafat Conferences were organised in several cities in northern India. A

Central Khilafat Committee, with provisions for provincial branches, was constituted at Bombay with Seth Chotani, a wealthy merchant, as its President, and Shawkat Ali as its Secretary. In 1920 the Ali Brothers produced the Khilafat Manifesto. The Central Khilafat Committee started a Fund to help the Nationalist Movement in Turkey and to organise the Khilafat Movement at home.

Contemporaneously, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi led his non-violent nationalist movement satyagraha, as a protest against government repression evidenced, for example, in the Rowlatt Act of 1919, and the Jalian Wallah Bagh Massacres of April 1919. To enlist Muslim support in his movement, Gandhi supported the Khilafat cause and became a member of the Central Khilafat Committee. At the Nagpur Session (1920) of the INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS Gandhi linked the issue of Swaraj (Self-Government) with the Khilafat demands and adopted the non-cooperation plan to attain the twin objectives.

By mid-1920 the Khilafat leaders had made common cause with Gandhi's NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT promising non-violence in return for Gandhi's support of the Khilafat Movement whereby Hindus and Muslims formed a united front against British rule in India. Support was received also of Muslim theologians through the Jamiyat-al Ulama-i-Hind (The Indian Association of Muslim Theologians). Maulana MOHMMAD AKRAM KHAN of Bengal was a member of its Central Executive and Constitution Committee.

However, the movement's objectives of communal harmony and nonviolence suffered a setback because of the Hijrat (Exodus) to Afghanistan in 1920 of about 18,000 Muslim peasants, mostly from Sind and North Western Provinces, the excesses of Muslims who felt that India was Dar-ul-Harb (Apostate land), the Moplah rebellion in South India in August 1921, and the Chauri-Chaura incident in February 1922 in the United Provinces where a violent mob set fire to a police station killing twenty-two policemen. Soon after Gandhi called off the Non-cooperation movement, leaving Khilafat leaders with a feeling of betrayal.

The extra-territorial loyalty of Khilafat leaders received a final and deadly blow from the Turks themselves. The charismatic



Turkish nationalist leader Mustafa Kemal's startling secular renaissance, his victories over invading Greek forces culminating in the abolition of the Sultanate in November 1922, and the transformation of Turkey into a Republic in October 1923, followed by the abolition of the Khilafat in March 1924, took the Khilafatists unaware. By 1924 the Khilafat Movement, had become devoid of any relevance and significance and met its end.

The first stirrings in favour of the Khilafat Movement in Bengal was seen on 30 December, 1918 at the 11th Session of the All India MUSLIM LEAGUE held in Delhi. In his presidential address, AK FAZLUL HUQ voiced concern over the attitude of Britain and her allies engaged in dividing and distributing the territories of the defeated Ottoman Empire.

When the Paris Peace Conference (1919) confirmed these apprehensions, Bengali Khilafat leaders such as Maulana Akram Khan, Abul Kasem, and MUJIBUR RAHMAN KHAN held a Public meeting in Calcutta on 9 February, 1919 to enlist public support in favour of preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and saving the institution of Khilafat.

In Bengal, the Khilafat-Non-Cooperation Movement (1918 to 1924) became a mass movement in which both Muslims and Hindus participated. The Bengal movement benefited from coordinated action by and between the Central and Provincial Khilafat leaders. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad propagated Khilafat ideas in rural Bengal. In the initial stage, the movement was popularised by Bengali leaders such as Maulana Akram Khan, MANIRUZZAMAN ISLAMABADI, Mujibur Rahman Khan, the brothers Maulana ABDULLAHIL KAFI and Maulana ABDULLAHIL BAQI, ISMAIL HOSSAIN SHIRAJI, Abul Kasem and AK Fazlul Huq. Maulana Akram Khan and Maniruzzaman Islambadi toured Bengal and organised Khilafat meetings, particularly in Dhaka and Chittagong. In an article Asahojogita-o-Amader Kartabya, Maniruzzaman Islambadi declared that to protect Khilafat and to acquire Swaraj were the twin aims of the movement and that it was the sacred duty of every Indian to support these ideas.

During the observance of the first Khilafat Day on 17 October 1919, most Indian-owned shops remained closed in Calcutta,

prayers were offered at different mosques, and public meetings were held all over Bengal. On 23-24 November 1919 the first All-India Khilafat Conference held in Delhi was presided over by AK Fazlul Huq from Bengal. It was resolved that pending a resolution of the Khilafat problem there would be no participation in the proposed peace celebrations, that British goods should be boycotted, and that a policy of non-cooperation with the government would be adopted. In early 1920 the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee was organised with Maulana Abdur Rauf as President, Maniruzzaman Islambadi as Vice President, Maulana Akram Khan as General Secretary, and Mujibur Rahman and Majid Baksh as Joint Secretaries respectively. The office of the organisation was located at Hiron Bari Lane of Kolutola Street in Calcutta.

The first Bengal Provincial Khilafat Conference was held at the Calcutta Town Hall on 28-29 February 1920. Several members of the Central Khilafat Committee attended. Prominent Bengali Khilafat leaders such as A K Fazlul Huq, Abul Kasem, Mujibur Rahman participated in the conference and reiterated the view that unless their demands on the Khilafat problem were met non-cooperation and boycott would continue. The conference decided to observe 19 March 1920 as the Second Khilafat Day.

In March 1920 a Khilafat delegation led by Maulana Muhammad Ali went to England to plead for the Khilafat cause. Abul Kasem represented Bengal in this delegation. Local Khilafat Committees were also constituted. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulvi Abdur Rahman became President and Secretary respectively of the Calcutta Khilafat Committee. On 20 December 1919 the Dhaka Committee was founded at the AHSAN MANZIL with Nawab KHWAJA HABIBULLAH as President, Syed Abdul Hafez as alternate President, and Gholam Quddus as Secretary. In response to the demands of the citizens of Dhaka, a "Sadar Khilafat Committee" was formed; Khwaja Sulaiman Kadar was its President, Maulana Abdul Jabbar Ansari, Hafez Abdur Razzak, Hafez Abdul Hakim its Vice-Presidents, and Maulvi Shamsul Huda its Secretary.

On 19 March 1920 the Second Khilafat Day was observed in Bengal. In Calcutta life almost came to a standstill and numerous



Khilafat meetings were held in Dhaka, Chittagong and Mymensingh. The largest meeting was held in Tangail and was presided over by ABDUL HALIM GHAZNAVI, the liberal nationalist Muslim zamindar. At this meeting, Maniruzzaman Islambadi urged the public to adopt Satyagraha as the symbol of the Khilafat movement.

Most districts of Bengal witnessed a mushroom growth of Khilafat Committees alongside existing Congress Committees, often with common membership. This was the first significant anti-British mass movement in which Hindus and Muslims participated with equal conviction. The media, both Muslim and Hindu, played a vital role in popularising the movement. 'Mohammadi', 'Al-Eslam' and 'The Mussalman' were publications which deserve mention.

The Khilafat Movement engendered a Muslim political consciousness that reverberated throughout Bengal under the leadership of Maulana Azad, Akram Khan, Maniruzzaman Islambadi, Bipin Chandra Pal and CHITTA RANJAN DAS. Though the Khilafat movement was orthodox in origin, it did manage to generate liberal ideas among Muslims because of the interaction and close understanding between Hindus and Muslims. Following the example of Calcutta, volunteer organisations were set up in rural Bengal to train volunteers to enforce boycott of foreign goods, courts, and government offices. They were also engaged in spinning, popularising items of necessity, and raising contributions for the Khilafat cause. In some areas in Dhaka, Muslim zamindars extracted 'Khilafat Salami' from Muslim tenants by declaring themselves the representatives of the Sultan of Turkey. Ironically, due to the ignorance of these tenants this custom continued long after the Khilafat was abolished.

Visibly shaken by the popularity of the Movement, through a Notification on 19 November 1921 the Government of Bengal declared the activities of the Khilafat and Congress volunteers illegal. Government officers raided Khilafat offices, confiscated documents and papers, banned meetings, and arrested office bearers. About a hundred and fifty personalities including Maulana Azad, CR Das, Akram Khan, and Ambika Prashad Bajpai were arrested in Calcutta on 10 December 1921.

At this critical juncture, a rift arose among Khilafat and Non-cooperation leaders on the issue of boycotting educational institutions and legislative councils. Some Muslim leaders believed that such boycott would be suicidal for Muslims. They were in favour of participating in the elections under the India Act of 1919 that assured self-governing institutions in India.

Prominent among this group of Swarajist leaders were CR Das, BIPIN CHANDRA PAL, Motilal Nehru, SURENDRANATH BANERJEA, Ashutosh Chowdhury, ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE and SARAT CHANDRA BOSE. Notable Muslims subscribing to the same ideas were AK Fazlul Huq, Abul Kasem, Khwaja Muhammad Azam, Khwaja Afzal, Nawab Khwaja Habibullah, HAKIM HABIBUR RAHMAN, Syed NAWAB ALI CHOWDHURY, Sir Syed Shamsul Huda, Sir ABDULLAH AL-MAMUN SUHRAWARDI, Maulana Abu Bakr Siddiky (Pir of Furfura), Shah Ahsanullah, Kazem Ali and HUSEYN SHAHEED SUHRAWARDY. Indian National Congress and the Muslim nationalists were strongly opposed to the idea of joining the councils.

Eminent Hindu personalities in Bengal who supported the Khilafat movement were Bipin Chandra Pal, Shrish Chandra Chattopadhya, Kaminikumar Bandyopadhaya, Dr Rai Kumar Chakravarty, PC Ghosh, Basanta Kumar Majumdar, ASWINI KUMAR DUTTA, Pyarilal Roy, Gurucharan Aich, Sarat Kumar Gupta, Poet Mukunda Das, Haranath Ghosh, Nagendra Bhattacharya, Satindra Sen, Dr Tarini Gupta, Sarol Kumar Dutta, Nishi Kanta Ganguly, Monoranjan Gupta, Sarat Kumar Ghosh, Nagendra Bijoy Bhattacharya, Nalini Das, Sailendra Nath Das, Khitish Chandra Roy Chowdhury and many others.

Though the Khilafat movement ended abruptly, the political activities it gave rise to and the experience gained therefrom, proved invaluable to Bengali Muslims after the 1947 partition. Among the numerous participants in the Khilafat movement from Bengal the names of some representative notable personalities are mentioned below: Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani originally from Pabna but later settled at Kagmari, in Tangail district, Zahiruddin Tarafdar (Mymensingh), Abul Mansur Ahmed (Mymensingh), Abul Kalam Shamsuddin (Mymensingh), Huseyn



Shaheed Suhrawardy (Calcutta), Maulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish (Pabna), Habibur Rahman Chowdhury (Comilla), Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chowdhury (Comilla), Shah Badrul Alam (Chittagong), Maulvi Aman Ali (Chittagong), Nurul Huq Chowdhury (Chittagong), Muhammad Waliullah (Chittagong), Kazem Ali Miah (Chittagong) Tamizuddin Khan (Faridpur), Pir Badshah Miah (Faridpur), Moazzem Hossain Chowdhury alias Lal Miah (Faridpur), Justice Muhammad Ibrahim (Faridpur), Majid Baksh (Barisal), Abul Kashem (Barisal), Khan Bahadur Hemayetuddin Ahmed (Barisal), Poet Mozammel Huq (Bhola) Hashem Ali Khan (Barisal), Wahed Reza Chowdhury of Ulania (Barisal), Sultan Ahmed Chowdhury (Barisal), Majed Kazi of Kasbah (Barisal), Khan Sahib Hatem Ali Jamadar (Barisal), Syed Muhammad Afzal (Pirojpur), Ismail Khan Chowdhury (Barisal), Maulvi Muhammad Ibrahim (Noakhali), Abdul Jabbar Khaddar (Noakhali), Abdul Gofran (Noakhali), Syed Ahmed Khan (Noakhali), Nasir Ahmad Bhuiyan (Noakhali), Suren Chandra Das Gupta (Bogra), Hussein Ahmed (Gaibandha), Rajibuddin Tarafdar (Bogra), Kabiraj Sheikh Abdul Aziz (Bogra), Ishaq Gokuli (Bogra), Maulana Maniruddin Anwari (Dinajpur), Shomeshwar Prasad Chowdhury (Burdwan), Shah Abdul Hamid (Rangpur), Afsaruddin Ahmed (Khulna), Sukumar Bandyopadhaya (Kushtia), Maulvi Shamsuddin Ahmed (Kushtia), Syed Majid Baksh (Jessore) and Maulana Ahmed Ali (Khulna).

In addition to the front-rank leaders of the Khilafat movement, a new class of Muslim leaders emerged during this period from urban as well as from distant parts of Bengal. They gained experience in organising and mobilising the public. The Khilafat movement provided an opportunity to throw up a new Mofassil based leadership which played a key role in introducing a coherent self-assertive political identity for Bengali Muslims. After the 1947 Partition, these personalities played effective roles in their respective areas of activity.

# 2

# Bipin Chandra Pal and Role of Press in Struggle

At the time of the first war of independence, any number of papers were in operation in the country. Many of these like Bangadoot of Ram Mohan Roy, Rastiguftar of Dadabhai Naoroji and Gyaneneshun advocated social reforms and thus helped arouse national awakening. At was in 1857 itself that Payam-e-Azadi started publication in Hindi and Urdu, calling upon the people to fight against the British. The paper was soon confiscated and anyone found with a copy of the paper was persecuted for sedition. Again, the first Hindi daily, Samachar Sudhavarashan, and two newspapers in Urdu and Persian respectively, Doorbeen and Sultan-ul-Akhar, faced trial in 1957 for having published a 'Firman' by Bahadur Shah Zafar, urging the people to drive the British out if India. This was followed by the notorious Gagging Act of Lord Canning, under which restrictions were imposed on the newspapers and periodicals.

## NOTABLE ROLE

In the struggle against the British, some newspapers played a very notable role. This included the Hindi Patriot! Established in 1853, by the author and playwright, Grish Chandra Ghosh, it became popular under the editorship of Harish Chandra Mukherjee. In 1861, the paper published a play, "Neel Darpan" and launched a movement against the British, urging the people to stop cultivating the crop for the white traders. This resulted in the formation of a Neel Commission. Later, the paper was taken over by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. The paper strongly opposed the Government's excesses and demanded that Indians be



appointed to top government posts. The Indian Mirror was the other contemporary of this paper which was very popular among the reading public. Yet another weekly, Amrita Bazar Patrika which was being published from Jessore, was critical of the government, with the result that its proprietors faced trial and conviction. In 1871, the Patrika moved to Calcutta and another Act was passed to suppress it and other native journals.

## MARATHI PRESS

Mahadev Govind Rande, a leading leader of Maharashtra, used to write in Gyan Prakash as well as the Indu Prakash. Both these journals helped awaken the con-science of the downtrodden masses. Another Marathi weekly, Kesari was started by Tilak from January 1, 1881. He alongwith Agarkar and Chiplunkar started another weekly journal, Mratha in English. The Editor of the 'Daccan Star' Nam Joshi also joined them and his paper was incorporated with Maratha. Tilak and Agarkar were convicted for writings against the British and the Diwan of Kolhapur. Tilak's Kesari became one of the leading media to propagate the message of freedom movement. It also made the anti-partition movement of Bengal a national issue. In 1908, Tilak opposed the Sedition ordinance. He was later exiled from the country for six years. Hindi edition of Kesari was started from Nagpur and Banaras.

The Editors commanded a very high reputation at the time of the birth of the Indian National Congress. One could measure the extent of this respect from the fact that those who occupied the frontline seats in the first ever Congress session held in Bombay in December 1885 included some of the editors of Indian newspapers. The first ever resolution at this Session was proposed by the editor of The Hindu, G. Subramanya Iyer. In this resolution, it was demanded that the government should appoint a committee to enquire into the functioning of Indian administration. The second resolution was also moved by a journalist from Poona, Chiplunkar in which the Congress was urged to demand for the abolition of India Council which ruled the country from Britain. The third resolution was supported by Dadabhai Naoroji who was a noted journalist of his time. The fourth resolution was proposed by Dadabhai Naoroji. There were many Congress Presidents who had either been the editors or had started the publication of one or the other newspapers. In this context,

particular mention may be made of Ferozeshah Mehta who had started the Bombay Chronicle and Pandit Madan Malaviya who edited daily, Hindustan. He also helped the publication of leader from Allahabad. Moti Lal Nehru was the first Chairman of the Board of Directors of the leader. Lala Lajpat Rai inspired the publication of three journals, the Punjabi, Bandematram and the People from Lahore. During his stay in South Africa, Gandhiji has brought out Indian Opinion and after settling in India, he started the publication of Young India; Navjeevan, Harijan, Harijan Sevak and Harijan Bandhu. Subash Chandra Bose and C. R. Das were not journalists but they acquired the papers like Forward and Advance which later attained national status. Jawaharlal Nehru founded the National Herald. So far as the revolutionary movement is concerned, it did not begin with guns and bombs but it started with the publication of newspapers. The first to be mentioned in this context is Yugantar publication of which was started by Barindra Kumar Ghosh who edited it also.

When the Ghadar party was organized in America, Lala Hardayal started publication of the journal 'Ghadar'. Within one year, millions of copies of this journal were published in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi and English and sent to India and to all parts of the world where Indians were residing. In the beginning the copies of the journal were concealed in parcels of foreign cloth sent to Delhi. It was also planned to smuggle the printing press into India for this purpose. But then the war broke out and it became almost impossible to import printing machinery from abroad. Lala Hardayal was attested in America and deported to India. One of his followers Pandit Ramchandra started publishing Hindustan Ghadar in English. With the U.S. joining the war, the Ghadar party workers were arrested by the American Government. When the trail was on, one of the rivals of Pandit Ramchandra managed to obtain a gun and shoot him dead in the jail itself. The death of Ramchandra led to the closure of this paper. In 1905 Shyamji Krishna Verma started publication of a journal Indian Sociologist from London. It used to publish reports of political activities taking place at the India House in London. In 1909 two printers of this journal were convicted. Shyamji Krishna Verma left England for Paris from where he started the publication of the journal. Later on, he had to leave for Geneva. He continued to bring out the journal from there for two or three years more.



In Paris, Lala Hardayal, in collaboration with Madam Cama and Sardar Singhraoji Rana brought our Vandematram and Talwar.

After Yugantar, it was Vandematram that played a significant role in the freedom struggle. This journal was established by Subodha Chandra Malik, C. R. Das and Bipin Chandra Pal on August 6, 1906. its editor, Aurobindo Ghosh, the editor of Sandhya B. Upadhyay and editor of Yugantar B.N.Dutt had to a face a trial for espousing the cause of freedom. So far as the Hindi papers were concerned, they looked to government for support for some time. Bhartendu Harish Chandra was the first to start a journal Kavi Vachan Sudha in 1868. its policy was to give vent to the miseries of the people of India. When the Prince of Wales visited India, a poem was published in his honour. The British authorities were given to understand that the poem could also mean that the Prince of Wales should get a shoe-beating.

The government aid to journals like Kavi Vachan Sudha was stopped for publishing what was objectionable from the government point of view. Bhartendu Harish Chandra resigned from his post of an honorary Magistrate. His two friends, Pratap Narain Mishra and Bal Krishna started publication of two important political journals. Two friends, Pratap Narain Mishra and Bal Krishna Bhatt started publication of two important political journals Pradeep from Allahabad, and Brahman from Kanpur. The Pradeep was ordered to be closed down in 1910 for espousing the cause of freedom.

The Bharat-Mitra was a famous Hindi journal of Calcutta which started its publication on May 17, 1878 as a fortnightly. It contributed a lot in propagating the cause of freedom movement. The journal exposed the British conspiracy to usurp Kashmir. Several other papers published from Calcutta which played an important role in freedom struggle included Ambika Prasad Vajpayee's Swantrantra, Ramanand Chatterjee's Modern Review in English, Pravasi Patra' in Bengali and Vishal Bharat in Hindi. One of the foremost Hindi journalist who has earned a name for his patriotism was Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi. In 1913, he brought out weekly Pratap from Kanpur. He made the supreme sacrifice in 1931 in the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. Krishna Dutt Paliwal brought out Sainik from Agra which became a staunch propagator of nationalism in Western U.P. The noted Congress leader, Swami

Sharadhanand, started the publication of Hindi journal Vir Arjun and Urdu journal Tej. After the assassination of Swami Sharadhanand, Vidyavachaspathi and Lala Deshbandhu Gupta continued the publication of these journals. They were themselves prominent Congress leaders. In Lahore, Mahashaya Khushal Chand brought out Milap and Mahashaya Krishna started publishing Urdu journals which helped a lot in promoting the national cause. In 1881, Sardar Dayal Singh Majitha on the advice of Surendra Nath Bannerjee brought out Tribune under the editorship of Sheetala Kant Chatterjee. Bipin Chandra Pal also edited this paper for sometime. Later in 1917, Kalinath Rai joined the paper as its editor.

There is not a single province in India which did not produce a journal of newspaper to uphold the cause of freedom struggle A. G. Horniman made the Bombay chronicle' a powerful instrument to promote militant nationalism. He himself took part in the meetings where Satyagraha used to be planned. He published vivid accounts of Jallianwala Bagh carnage for which one correspondent of his paper, Goverdhan Das, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment by a military court. Horniman too was arrested and deported to London even though he was ill at that time. Amritlal Shet brought out the Gujarati Journal 'Janmabhumi which was an organ of the people of the princely states of Kathiawad, but it became a mouthpiece of national struggle. Similarly another Gujarati journal Saanjvartman played a prominent role under the editorship of Sanwal Das Gandhi, who played a very significant role in the Quit India Movement in 1942. It was soon after independent formed a parallel Government in Junagarh and forced the Nawab of Junagarh to leave the country. The three editors of the Sindhi journal Hindi Jairam Das Daulatram, Dr. Choithram Gidwani and Hiranand Karamchand, were arrested, their press closed and the property of the paper confiscated.

In Bihar the tradition of national newspapers was carried forward by Sachidanand Sinha, who had started the publication of Searchlight under the editorship of Murtimanohar Sinha. Dev Brat Shastri started publication of 'Nav Shakti and Rashtra Vani'. The weekly yogi and the Hunkar' also contributed very much to the general awakening.

# 3

# The Partition of Bengal

The year 1905 is one of the most important years in the history of the freedom movement of India. It was in that year that the British Government decided to partition Bengal. The decision to partition Bengal into two provinces shocked the whole country. It was part of their political trump card, the policy of divide and rule. As a matter of fact, from 1870 onwards, the British started inciting the Hindus and the Muslims to form their own political parties to establish their distinct religious identities. That was the beginning of the communalisation of politics.

The British not only encouraged the two communities to form political parties along religious lines, they took various steps to create a situation whereby Hindus and Muslims would be forced to think that their religious identity was at peril. This effort culminated in the partition of Bengal in 1905. The Presidency of Bengal was divided into two parts apparently for administrative reasons. It was argued that Bengal, Bihar and Orissa which formed a single province of British India since 1765, had grown too large to handle under a single administration; but it was quite clear that the partition was made along communal lines in order to divide the communities. Even Lord Curzon on a tour of East Bengal, confessed that his "object in partitioning was not only to relieve the Bengali administration, but to create a Mohammedan province, where Islam could be predominant and its followers in ascendancy."

It thus provided an impetus to the religious divide and one of the results was the formation of the Muslim League. The people of Bengal were indignant and outraged. For them the partition

was not merely a fresh application of the British policy of divide-and-rule, but the sundering of the soul of a people. This single event brought about united opposition from all groups, political and non-political. Poet Rabindranath Tagore, Sir Gurudas Banerjee, a Judge, and the Maharajas of Mymensingh and Cossimbazar all joined in the protest. This triggered off a tremendous awakening and it manifested in a sudden outburst of the genius of the Bengali race, flowering in the field of literature and music. So great was its impact that Ramsay Macdonald exclaimed: "Bengal is creating India by song and worship, it is clothing her in queenly garments."

Thus began the second phase of the Freedom Movement. This period covered the period between 1905 and 1915. It must be noted that the movement was not restricted to Bengal. The whole of India got involved into the cauldron; in Maharashtra, Tilak took direct part, in Punjab it was Lala Lapat Rai and in South India it was Subramaniam Bharati. Slogans of Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott, and National Education, emerged during the anti-partition campaign. Bal Gangadhar Tilak carried on a vigorous propaganda of this programme and recommended its adoption at the session of the Congress held at Calcutta in 1906. Dadabhai Naoroji and other leaders of the Liberal faction supported the proposal and it was adopted. Tilak emerged as a leader of national stature from that year.

But the most important consequence of the Partition of Bengal was the advent of Sri Aurobindo in active politics. Sri Aurobindo was then in Baroda and he wrote about the partition: "This measure is no mere administrative proposal but a blow straight at the heart of the nation." Then the Vice-Principal of the College in Baroda, he left his comfortable job and moved to Calcutta and joined active politics. It was then that the Bengal National College was founded and he became its first Principal. He began writing editorials for "Bandemataram", an English daily started by Bipin Chandra Pal, and by the end of the year was the paper's 'chief editor'. Sri Aurobindo stated that his first occupation "was to declare openly for complete and absolute independence as the aim of political action in India and to insist on this persistently in the pages of the journal". He was the first politician in India who had the courage to do this in public and he was immediately



successful. Bandemataram soon circulated through the country and became a powerful force in moulding its political thought.

First, there was the action with which he started, a secret revolutionary propaganda and organisation of which the central object was the preparation of an armed insurrection. Secondly, there was a public propaganda intended to convert the whole nation to the ideal of independence which was regarded by the vast majority of Indians as unpractical and impossible, an almost insane chimera.

Thirdly there was the organisation of the people to carry on a public and united opposition and undermining of the foreign rule through an increasing non-cooperation and passive resistance.

We shall now take up each one of these three sides separately.

Regarding the public propaganda intended to convert the whole nation to the ideal of independence. Sri Aurobindo devised a two-pronged strategy for this purpose. The first one was to use the columns of the Bandemataram to spread the ideal of total freedom and secondly to capture the Congress Party. For this purpose Sri Aurobindo, Tilak and other leaders formed a new party called the Nationalist Congress party.

Here is a quotation from Bipin Chandra Pal's book: Indian Nationalism: its Personalities and Principles: "The youngest in age among those who stand in the forefront of the Nationalist propaganda in India, but in endowment, education and character, perhaps superior to them all-Aravinda seems distinctly marked out by Providence to play in the future of this movement a part not given to any of his colleagues and contemporaries…. The Nationalist School was without a daily English organ. A new paper was started. Aravinda was invited to join its staff. A joint-stock company floated to run it, and Aravinda became one of the directors. This paper Bandemataram at once secured for itself a recognized position in Indian journalism. The hand of the master was in it from the very beginning. Its bold attitude, its vigorous thinking, its clear ideas, its chaste and powerful diction, its scorching sarcasm and refined witticism were unsurpassed by any journal in the country, either Indian or Anglo-Indian. It at once raised the tone of every Bengali paper and compelled the

admiration of even hostile Ango-Indian editors. Morning after morning not only Calcutta, but the educated community in every part of the country eagerly awaited its vigourous pronouncements on the stirring questions of the day…. It was a force in the country no one dared to ignore, however much they might fear or hate it, and Aravinda was the leading spirit, the central force in the new journal."

The editor of the Statesman complained that the Bandemataram "reeked with sedition patently visible between every line, but it was so skillfully written that no legal action could be taken." And yet years later Mr Ratcliffe, editor of the Statesman wrote: "It was in 1906 shortly after Curzon's retirement, that Sri Aurobindo and his friends started Bande Mataram. It had a full-sized sheet, was clearly printed on green paper, and was full of leading and special articles written in English with a brilliance and pungency not hitherto attained in the Indian press. It was the most effective voice of what we then called Nationalist Extremism.

Here is an illustration from the writings of Sri Aurobindo:

"Lala Lajpat Rai has been deported out of British India. The fact is its own comment. The telegram goes on to say that indignations meetings have been forbidden for four days. Indignation meetings? The hour of speeches and fine writings is past. The bureaucracy has thrown down the gauntlet. We take it up. Men of the Punjab! Race of the Lion! Show these men who would stamp you into the dust that for one Lajpat they have taken away, a hundred Lajpats will arise in his place. Let them hear a hundred times louder your war-cry: 'Jai Hindustan'!"

At the same time, Sri Aurobindo built up a comprehensive scheme of political action know as Passive Resistance or Boycott, the most potent and fruitful contribution to the whole of India in the beginning of the twentieth century. This is what he wrote: "The first principle of passive resistance, which the new school have placed in the forefront of their programme, is to make administration under present conditions impossible by an organized refusal to do anything which shall help either British commerce in the exploitation of the country or British officialdom in the administration of it-unless and until the conditions are changed in the manner and to the extent demanded by the people.



This attitude is summed up in one word boycott." It was originally devised as an economic weapon to hit the British rulers at their most vital point; but Sri Aurobindo endowed it with far reaching possibilities. It soon expressed itself in the four-fold Non-cooperation-economic boycott, educational boycott, judicial boycott and the boycott of the executive administration. And this boycott was to be kept judiciously within the bounds of law.

He wrote a series of brilliant articles in the Bandemataram entitled "The Doctrine of Passive Resistance"; in these articles, he expounded a detailed programme of non-cooperation. In these articles, we find an incisive analysis of its importance and also valuable hints regarding its technique. While advocating non-cooperation, Sri Aurobindo was careful to define its limits. Here is a quotation from Sri Aurobindo: "There is a limit however to passive resistance. So long as the action of the executive is peaceful and within rules of the fight, the passive resister scrupulously maintains his attitude of passivity, but he is not bound to do so a moment beyond. To submit to illegal or violent methods of coercion, to accept outrage and hooliganism as part of the legal procedure of the country, is to be guilty of cowardice, and, by dwarfing national manhood, to sin against the divinity within ourselves and the divinity in our motherland… Passive resistance cannot build up a strong and great nation unless it is masculine, bold and ardent in its spirit and ready at any moment and at the slightest notice to supplement itself with active resistance. We do not want to develop a nation of women who know only how to suffer and not how to strike."

We thus see that the non-violent non-cooperation movement of Gandhi was found to be anticipated substantively by the movement of Passive Resistance in the early part of the century and that its foundations were firmly laid at least a decade before he came on the Indian political scene. It should be clear from the above quotation that with Sri Aurobindo Passive Resistance was only a tool and not a creed to be followed in all situations and circumstances.

Regarding the plan for armed revolution, one of the ideas of Sri Aurobindo was to establish secretly, under various pretexts and covers, revolutionary propaganda and recruiting throughout

Bengal. This was to be done among the youth of the country while sympathy and support and financial and other assistance were to be obtained from the older men who had advanced views or could be won over to them. Centres were to be established in every town and eventually in every village. Societies of young men were to be established with various ostensible objects, cultural, intellectual or moral and those already existing were to be won over for revolutionary use. Young men were to be trained in activities which might be helpful for ultimate military action, such as riding, physical training, athletics of various kinds, drill and organised movement. It was in 1901 that Sri Aurobindo made his first move by sending Jatin Banerjee as his lieutenant to Bengal with a programme of preparation and action, which he thought might occupy a period of 30 years before fruition, could become possible. Jatin was also charged with setting up centres in every town and eventually in every village. As soon as the idea was sown, it attained rapid prosperity. It must be noted that there were many other secret societies in Bengal already flourishing. Rajnarain Bose had already formed one in which the Tagore brothers were members and Sarala Ghosal founded several clubs where not only boys but girls too were taught to wield lathi and sword. Sarala Ghosal was indeed the foremost organiser of physical education in Bengal.

It will be of some interest to note that Sri Aurobindo first met Tilak in 1901 at Baroda. Later in 1902 at the Allahabad Congress, the two met again. Tilak took him out of the pandal and talked to him for an hour in the grounds expressing his contempt of action of the Reformist movement and explaining his own line of action in Maharashtra. The Congress was held under the chairmanship of Surendranath Banerjee, who declared: "We plead the permanence of British rule in India." From this time onwards, Sri Aurobindo and Tilak were in close contact.

Sri Aurobindo and Tilak however soon realized that an armed revolt at that stage of India's history was not feasible, and though he continued to support and guide the underground terrorist movement in the hope that it would demoralize the British, he had no illusions as to the possibility of mere terrorism securing the country's freedom.



The Nationalist Congress party was formed and it was decided that they should capture the Congress Party, which was then led by the Moderates. This will form the subject of the next chapter dealing with the Surat Congress.

## THE SURAT CONGRESS

The Surat Congress is one of the most important events in the history of the Freedom Movement as well as in the history of the Indian National Congress. Though not officially given its due importance in the records of history, yet it marks a turning point in India's struggle for freedom. It ushered in the spirit of freedom and the sense of dignity of the Indian nationhood; a whole new psychological climate was created. But it took the Congress party more than two decades to officially accept and openly declare on January 26 1930 the concept of total freedom, which was the slogan of the Nationalists in the Congress in 1907.

However, before we come to the Surat Congress, let us follow briefly the sequence of events immediately after the Partition of Bengal. After Curzon's proposal to partition Bengal became known in December 1903, protest meetings in the typical Congress style based on prayers and petitions were carried out for more than one and a half year, with absolutely no effect on the British. However at the same time, there was a spontaneous boycott of British goods in Bengal. The Swadeshi movement was on its way. The appeal of the Swadeshi movement was its direct mass approach and its rejection of "prayer-petition" politics. Instead it sought for a complete overthrow of British rule. It was this prospect that frightened the leadership of the Congress; the next few years show the battle in the Congress between these two trends.

It was on July 19, 1905 that Curzon went ahead with his partition plan. Within days, spontaneous protests were organised all over Bengal and the boycott of British goods was started.

By August, even Congress leaders such as Surendranath Banerjea were forced to take up the Boycott call. On August 7, 1905, in a public meeting at the Calcutta Town Hall, the Boycott Resolution was passed. The Swadeshi movement, which came earlier and was seeking for the complete overthrow of British rule, took full advantage of this uprising among the people of Bengal.

But this, the Congress leadership could not tolerate. It was evident that the Congress leadership did not even stand for national independence. Quite predictably they reacted to the Swadeshi movement. As early as November 1905, the Congress leaders felt things had gone too far. They managed to call off the boycott of British educational institutions on November 16, 1905. The appointment of the reputedly liberal Morley as Secretary of State and Minto as Viceroy was seized upon as a reason for ending the boycott. Gokhale proclaimed at the December 1905 Congress at Benares: "Gentlemen, how true it is that to everything there is an end! Thus even the Viceroyalty of Curzon has come to an end!" He went on to extol Lord Ripon as having kindled the flame of National Consciousness and the Congress.

### THE BENARES CONGRESS

At a time when the boycott movement was raging in Bengal, the Benares Congress passed no resolution supporting it. The impending visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales would have been a splendid occasion for the Congress to protest at least against the repression on the Swadeshi agitators. Instead, the Congress leaders moved a resolution "most humbly and respectfully" welcoming the Prince and Princess. Those in the Subjects Committee who disagreed,-Tilak and others were in a minority,-however agreed as a compromise to abstain from the voting on this "unanimously passed" resolution. Yet, the "extremists", as the nationalists were then called, were not willing to be tamed in this fashion. Meetings were held all over India against the British. The message of these meetings was clearly against British imperialism and that alarmed the "moderates" further.

### THE CALCUTTA CONGRESS

As already noted, Sri Aurobindo and Tilak had formed in 1906, the Nationalist Congress Party. It seemed that by the 1906 session of the Congress, the Nationalists in the Congress, by their sheer numbers and popularity, seemed poised to take over the Congress. This was because of the decision to hold the session at Calcutta. The audience (excluding the delegates) numbered 20,000-over four times the number that was normally present at earlier



Congresses. Nationalists from different provinces had forged some links in the interim, and there were attempts to elect one of them President for the Congress. The move was scotched by the "moderates"; they elected the aged and respected Naoroji instead. However, the 1906 Congress leadership despite being unhappy was forced to accept four resolutions dealing with: the partition of Bengal, the boycott movement, Swadeshi, and self-government. But, the 1906 Congress was by no means a radical affair. The leadership managed to tone down each resolution considerably to make them ambiguous. Thus "Swaraj" became "the system of government obtaining in the self-governing British colonies". The effort of the "Nationalists" to have the resolution in support of the Bengal boycott movement extended to other provinces was defeated. And further, the Congress leaders were determined to review every resolution of the Nationalists at the next session.

### SABOTAGE OF 1906 RESOLUTIONS

In the interim between the 1906 and 1907 Congress sessions, the Congress leaders, especially Gokhale, made several statements reinterpreting the four 1906 resolutions. For example, on February 4, 1907, Gokhale made his oft-quoted remark that "I want India to take her proper place among the great nations of the world, politically, industrially, in religion, in literature, in science and in arts...I want all this and I feel at the same time that the whole of this aspiration can, in its essence and its reality, be realised within this Empire". On February 9, he effectively repudiated the main slogan of Bengal,-viz, boycott: "I am sure most of those who speak of this `boycott' mean by it the use, as far as possible, of Swadeshi articles in preference to foreign articles. Now such use is really included in the Swadeshi, but unfortunately the word `boycott' has a sinister meaning to it,-it implies a vindictive desire to injure another, no matter what harm you may thereby cause yourself. And I think we would do well to use only the word Swadeshi to describe our present movement, leaving out the word `boycott' which creates unnecessary ill will against ourselves. Moreover, remember that a strict `boycott' of foreign goods is not at all practicable in our present industrial condition...." He thus gave the movement a twist and reinterpretation, which was to become a point of diversion within the movement.

It is not surprising therefore that the "extremist" delegates at the 1907 Congress believed the rumours that the four Calcutta resolutions were going to be revoked (in fact, the resolutions were later dropped or amended). The session of the Congress had first been arranged at Nagpur, but Nagpur was predominantly a Mahratta city and violently extremist. Gujarat was at that time predominantly moderate; there were very few Nationalists and Surat was a stronghold of Moderatism. However, the Mehta-Gokhale combine, with its greater control over the actual machinery of the Congress, got the location transferred to Surat. Since, by convention, the local Reception Committee also chose the President, this also ensured a "moderate" President.

The Nationalists however, came in strength, from all parts; they held a public conference with Sri Aurobindo as the President.

The decision to shift the venue of the Congress was taken at the last moment, so that the Nationalists could not turn up in large numbers. To defeat this strategy of the Moderates, Sri Aurobindo, in the columns of Bandemataram, appealed to the delegates of the Nationalist party to attend the Surat Congres. Here are two extracts from the Bandemataram:

*"We call upon Nationalists, who are at all desirous of the spread of Nationalist principles and Nationalist practice all over India, to make ready at whatever inconvenience and, if they find it humanly possible, go to Surat to support the Nationalist cause. We are aware of the tremendous difficulties in our way. Surat is far distant, the expenses of such a journey are almost prohibitive, for only a small percentage of our party are men of means, and the time for preparation is almost nil. And yet we must go. What is a Nationalist good for if he cannot make up by his enthusiasm and energy for his other deficiencies, if he cannot make nothing of difficulties and turn the impossible into the possible? It is to sweep away difficulties and to strike the word impossible out of the Indian's dictionary that our party has arisen."*

Later in the same article he wrote:

*"We must go as poor men whose wealth is our love for our Motherland as pilgrims travelling to our Mother's temple. We have a great work to do and cannot afford to be negligent and half-hearted. Be sure that this year 1907 is a turning point of our destinies. Let us fear to miss by absenting ourselves the chance of helping to put in one of the keystones of the house we are building for our Mother's dwelling in the future, the house of her salvation, the house of Swaraj."*



The Surat Congress was to be held in the last week of December 1907. In this context, we shall quote some passages from the writings of Mr. Nevinson who was then a member of the British Parliament and who reported on the Surat Congress in the Manchester Guardian.

*"When I reached the house in a large square… I found it dark and apparently empty. A Hindu servant let me in, and after a time Mr. Aurobindo Ghose appeared alone. He had not expected me, because the letter about my coming had been stopped, no doubt by postal spies, as he said all his letters were. … He was a youngish man, I should think still under thirty. Intent dark eyes looked from his thin clear-cut face with a gravity that seemed immovable, but the figure and bearing were those of an English graduate. There is a religious tone, a spiritual elevation… He was possessed by that concentrated vision… But at the end of the road he saw a vision more inspiring and spiritual than any fanatic saw who rushed on death with Paradise in sight. Nationalism was to him more than a political object or a means of material improvement.*

Grave with intensity, careless of fate or opinion, and one of the most silent men I have known, he was of the stuff that dreamers are made of, but dreamers who will act their dream, indifferent to the means." The Nationalists held a public meeting before the session of the Surat Congress. Nevinson further writes:

*"Grave and silent-I think without saying a single word-Mr. Aravinda Ghosh took the chair, and sat unmoved, with far-off eyes, as one who gazes at futurity. In clear, short sentences, without eloquence or passion, Mr. Tilak spoke till the stars shone out and someone kindled a lantern at his side."*

It was known that the Moderates leaders had prepared a new constitution for the Congress, which would make it practically

impossible for the extreme party to command a majority at any annual session for many years to come.

It was obvious that a showdown was at hand. Tilak, Sri Aurobindo and other Nationalist leaders made it quite clear before the session began that although they had no desire to split the Congress they would in no case agree to retreat from the 1906 resolutions. On December 26th the draft resolutions were made available just before the session was to begin, and they revealed that certain changes and modifications had been made in the swadeshi, boycott and national education resolutions with a view to watering them down. In the afternoon the session met and there was an uproar over the nomination of the President. The session had to be postponed and it met again the next day. It was then that the final debacle was witnessed.

The first business was the election of the President. The Nationalists had proposed Lala Lajpat Rai, just released from prison, to be the President of the 23rd Congress. The Moderates opposed this and chose instead Dr Rashbehari Ghose, a lawyer from Calcutta. His name was proposed and Lajpat Rai duly withdrew his.

We quote again from Nevinson:

*"But when Surendranath rose to second the motion, and before he could utter the full sentence, a tumult burst. Waving their arms, their scarves, their sticks and umbrellas, a solid mass of delegates and spectators on the right of the Chair, sprang to their feet and shouted without a moment's pause.*

Over their head was the label, 'Central Provinces'-Central Provinces where Nagpur stands and Congress was to have been. Remember Nagpur! they cried, Remember Midnapur! White turbans from Madras joined them.

The whole ten thousand were on their feet, shouting for order, and shouting for tumult. Surendranth tried again and again to speak, again and again he was shouted down with cries of Shame, Shame! Traitor! The Congress broke up without transacting any business. Wild defence was met by wild denunciation, but no violence followed. It was a still and peaceful people, anxious to leave conciliation open.



By noon the pandal was full to overflowing. At one o'clock the Presidential procession entered. The Congress leaders took their seats behind the green table that stretched the whole length of the high-raised platform, before which there was no railing, but only as it were an escarpment for defence. Tilak was seated in the front row and not on the dais in the place reserved for him. As the procession entered Tilak sent a note to the Chairman saying that he wished to speak on the election of the President. The Chairman of the Reception Committee was Tribhuvandas Malvi of Surat."

The previous day, the Nationalists had tried to avert a showdown. Tilak and Khaparde had tried in vain to meet Malvi and later on they tried to meet Gokhale and Pherozeshah Mehta, that too in vain. It was then that Tilak sent the note to Malvi, the Chairman. The note said: "Sir, I wish to address the delegates on the proposal of the election of the President after it is seconded. I wish to move an adjournment with a constructive proposal. Please announce me." Tilak received no reply despite many reminders. After several speakers spoke, including Motilal Nehru and Surendranath Banerjee, the Chairman Mr Malvi proposed that Dr Rash Behari Ghose should take the Chair as President.

*"Brother Delegates, ladies and gentlemen, he began, my first duty is to tender you my thanks for the signal honour you have done me.*

*"Beyond his first duty he never went. As when lightning flashes in air surcharged with storm, Mr Tilak was seen standing in front of the Presidential Chair itself, expostulating, protesting, all in that calm decisive voice of his, the voice of a man indifferent to fate. He had given notice of an amendment, he was there to move it, and there he would remain.*

After an altercation with Mr Malvi, Tilak appealed to the delegates. Uproar drowned the rest. With folded arms Mr Tilak faced the audience. On either side of him, young Moderates sprang to their feet, wildly gesticulating vengeance. Shaking their fists and yelling to the air, they clamoured to hurl down the steep of the platform. Behind him Dr Ghose mounted the table, and ringing an unheard bell, harangued the storm in shrill, agitated, unintelligible denunciations. Restraining the rage of the Moderates,

Mr Gokhale, sweet natured even in extremes, stood beside his old opponent, flinging out both arms to protect him from the threatened onset. But Mr Tilak asked for no protection. He stood there with folded arms, defiant, calling on violence to do its worst, calling on violence to move him, for he would move for nothing else in hell or heaven. In front, the white-clad audience roared like a tumultuous sea.

Suddenly, something flew through the air,-a shoe-a Mahratta shoe, reddish leather, pointed toe, sole studded with lead. It struck Surendranath Banerjee on the cheek; it cannoned off upon Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. It flew, it fell, and as at a given signal, white waves of turbaned men surged up the escarpment. Leaping, climbing, hissing the breath of fury, brandishing long sticks, they came, striking at any head that looked to them Moderate and in another moment, between brown legs standing upon the green baize table, I caught glimpses of the Indian National Congress dissolving in chaos."

Tilak was borne off by his followers and Sri Aurobindo quietly left.

*"Like Goethe at the battle of Valmy, I could have said, "Today marks the beginning of a new era, and you can say that you were present at it,"*

In the vast pavilion a combat raged at large. Group rushed upon group, delegate upon delegate. Ten thousand men, all crowded among ten thousand chairs, no uniform, no distinction, nothing to mark off Extremist from Moderates, except the facial expression of a temperament-it was a difficult conflict to maintain. Finally the Police arrived. Within an hour the vast pandal, strewn with broken chairs, sticks and rags of raiment stood empty as a banquet hall deserted.

In the twinkling of a shoe the Congress had been changed, and a new spirit, a different and difficult spirit had indeed arisen in the country."

It had been roses, roses all the way, when the Moderates had traveled to Surat. On Sunday, as the party returned by train, each station rang with shouts of Down with Rash Behari, Down with Gokhale, Down with Surendranath.



The Bandemataram had kept its promise.

The event marked the final split between the Radical and Moderate wings of the Congress. The Radicals virtually seceded from the organization. But although for several years the Moderate leaders continued to run the Congress and hold its sessions it became clear that they lacked any mass support. In the words of Shri Diwakar:

*"The Surat Congress ended in a fiasco but made history. The result was that the moderates continued to possess the body of the Congress while the spirit went out along with the extremists. For the next ten years Indian nationalism flourished outside the precincts of the National organization. When it returned to the charge in 1916 it completely routed the Moderates, who later continued their existence outside the Congress as a small and not very influential coterie. They ceased to be a political force in the country."*

*" Sri Aurobindo, who always liked to work from behind the scene, had been pushed into the fore-front of the freedom movement. He had now become its acknowledged leader. The whole country rang with the cry of Bande Mataram and a new spirit swept across the country. People had awakened to the need of Swaraj-complete independence-and were willing to give their lives to attain it."*

The revolt of 1857 suppressed by ruthless reprisals was followed by a lull but the spirit of resistance did not die out completely. Extreme economic distress and recurrent famines kept the smouldering fire alive. People became desperate and began to think of adopting measures leading to violent action. The Mahratta country was simmering with discontent and troubles began with sporadic gang robberies and attacks on money-lenders and the whole military force had to take the field against them.

The leadership of this band fell upon a young man, Vasudev Balvant Phadke, who tried to lead a national revolt upon the lines of Shivaji on which Mahratta power had been founded. The miseries of the people became too much for him to bear and he thought of preparing the country with the help of the educated class, if possible and without them, if necessary, for an armed

revolt. As he could not get the educated class to participate, he turned towards the Ramoshi tribe, which once formed part of the Mahratta army and rose in revolt against the British army in 1826. He was very successful in his efforts and was able to recruit a valiant band of comrades around him.

Assured of selfless, sacrificing and brave soldiers he turned his mind towards organising a secret society of youth drawn from various quarters and enthused them with lectures and examples of suffering and sacrifice that he himself practised. He made arrangements for giving them military training in the areas near the Ferguson and Gultekdi hills. His whole mind and heart was set on this and he wrote: "From morning to night, bathing, eating, sleeping, I was brooding over the thought of driving the British and I could get no proper rest." This thought he expressed in all his speeches and would fire the audience.

Not getting any help from the rich men who thought him to be a mad man, he was forced to resort to plundering the Government properties. His army grew in strength and size. He was helped in the recruitment by a devoted friend, Daulatrao Ramoshi, and Govindrao Davare. Davare was a great source of strength and was known as the General and Phadke was called 'Shivaji II'.

Phadke's plan was to attack simultaneously at a large number of points so that people could gradually come to think that he was irresistible with a big army at his command. He would strike at the system of communications, the post, telegraph and the railways; he would also plunder Government treasuries and break open the jails and release the prisoners who would gladly join his army. He had plans to raise an Indian army if he got sufficient funds.

He began attacking the British far and wide and it was well nigh impossible to arrest him. In 1879 he attacked the village Dhamari followed by such places as Valeh, Palaspe. The districts around Poona became the playground of the Ramoshi heroes. Under the leadership of Daulatrao Ramoshi, they attacked areas in the Konkan and captured a large booty. Unfortunately in one of these encounters, Daulatrao lost his life and the morale of the Ramoshis was badly shaken.



In 1879, Phadke himself was captured on the 3rd of July in a temple of Kaladgi, a district in Hyderabad. He was charged for revolt and was awarded a sentence of transportation for life. He was sent to Aden, for it was not considered safe to keep such a resourceful enemy in India. However, he managed to escape from prison but before long he was arrested. This time he was kept under a more strict watch. This great fighter for the freedom of his motherland breathed his last in Aden on February 17 1883.

## THE BENGAL REVOLUTIONARIES

As already seen in the earlier chapters, one of the ideas of Sri Aurobindo was to establish secretly, under various pretexts and covers, revolutionary propaganda and recruiting throughout Bengal. Societies of young men were to be established with various ostensible objects, cultural, intellectual or moral and those already existing were to be won over for revolutionary use. Young men were to be trained in activities which might be helpful for ultimate military action, such as riding, physical training, athletics of various kinds, drill and organised movement. As soon as the idea was sown it attained a rapid prosperity.

One of the chief leaders of the revolutionary movement in Bengal was Sri Aurobindo's younger brother, Barindra Kumar Ghose. In the middle of 1907, he formed his own revolutionary group of about twenty young men. Their training centre was located in Manicktola, in the outskirts of Calcutta. This centre was spiritual-political in its character, a kind of Ashram for the creation of a band of revolutionary Sanyasins. Its diverse curriculum ranged from meditation and scriptural study to martial arts and the manufacture of bombs.

From the year 1905 the British Government was ruthless in its suppression of the Swadeshi movement. In 1907 several Calcutta newspaper editors were imprisoned for sedition, protest meetings were banned or broken up, women and children were beaten for daring to shout "Bandemataram". After the Congress split at Surat, the British had adopted the dual policy of encouraging and patronizing the Moderates while severely repressing the Nationalists. This policy was openly advocated by the Moderates. Thus in his undelivered speech for the 1907 session at Surat, Rash

Behari Ghose had remarked that "if the Government can only rally the Moderates to their side... they will extinguish the new party completely, and the ominous shadow which has projected itself over the future fortunes of the country will disappear." A cry for retribution naturally arose.

Douglas Kingsford was the magistrate of Calcutta and he was chiefly responsible for the arrest of editors of the National press and the caning of young men for singing Bandemataram.

One such case was the prosecution of the Bandemataram; the editor Bipin Chandra Pal refused to depose against Sri Aurobindo and this created a wild enthusiasm among the people. Young men would throng the court of Kingsford and shout Bandemataram. In response to this, large number of helmeted police was set against the boys. Indiscriminate beating followed and caused a stampede and many young boys sustained serious injuries.

The government became aware of threats of revenge against Kingsford and it decided to transfer him to the remote district of Muzaffarpur, Bihar, in March 1908. But by then Barin Ghose, had resolved to assassinate him.

For this mission, two young men were deputed, eighteen year old Khudiram Bose and nineteen-year old Prafulla Chaki. Armed with three revolvers and a small dynamite bomb, they went to Muzaffarpur towards the end of April and observed the judge's activities for a few days. On the evening of the 30th, they stood by a tree near the road across from Kingsford's house and waited for him to return from his club. At 8-30 a horse drawn carriage approached which they took to be his; in it, in fact, were two Englishwomen, Mrs Kennedy and her daughter Grace. Khudiram ran up and hurled the bomb into the carriage. A loud explosion shattered the vehicle and mortally wounded both its occupants. Kingsford travelling just behind them in a similar carriage had been saved. Unaware of the tragic mishap, the two boys fled from the spot and decided to split up. The police put out a widespread alert, with instructions to arrest any suspicious young Bengalis and offered a reward of Rs 5000 for information.

Khudiram walked through the night without food or drink and arrived the next morning, tired and exhausted, at the small



town of Waini. There he was arrested by an alert policeman and sent back to Muzaffarpur to stand trial. Khudiram did not contest the case. He told his lawyer that there was no questioning of pleading innocent; he had thrown the bomb that had killed two innocent women and he was responsible for this act. He regretted that the ladies had died, but he also regretted that Kingsford still lived, for he considered the judge to be the greatest tyrant in India. The lawyer asked Khudiram if he was afraid to die. No, he replied, he has no reason to fear, for he had read the Gita well. During the proceedings Khudiram looked on passively, betraying no emotion. When the death penalty was read out, he remained so expressionless that the judge asked him if he understood the verdict. The boy's face brightened and he nodded his head yes.

Two years earlier, at the age of sixteen, Khudiram had been arrested for distributing an inflammatory pamphlet, but the Government dropped a court case for sedition because he was so young. This time there was no reprieve. At six in the morning of August 11, he walked firmly and cheerfully to the gallows erected at Muzaffarpur Jail. Before the cap was pulled over his head, he smiled. Having served his country faithfully, the young patriot was ready to die.

The Bandemataram editorial wrote on August 12th:

> *His last wish was to partake of the "Prasad" of the local deity by way of receiving its blessing. In the prison he was absorbed all day in the study of religion and patriotic literature. He was preparing to die and his conduct on the scaffold shows how complete was the preparation. He all along knew to what extent he was responsible for the crime. But that he was prepared to bear his full share of responsibility cannot in the least be doubted. His ambition was to die for his country like the Rajput women on the funeral pyres.... It is not given to every man to overcome the weakness of flesh in this way. People can never forget how the Spirit got the better of the flesh in this young man. We are really reminded of the spiritual strength of yore.*

When a young worker in India has to go to jail, when he is asked to suffer, he does not feel any pang in the suffering, he does not fear suffering. He goes forward with joy. He says, "The hour of my consecration has come, and I have to thank God now that

the time for laying myself on his altar has arrived and that I have been chosen to suffer for the good of my countrymen. This is the hour of my greatest joy and the fulfilment of my life."

Jyotindra Nath Mukherjee, also known as Bagha Jyotin is one of the most resplendent personalities in the annals of the Indian freedom struggle. Born on the 6th of December 1879 in a village in Bengal, he was brought up by his mother, Sharatsashi Devi; she was a woman of strong character and instilled in the young lad daring and courage.

Jyotin's father died when he was only five and she took up the responsibility of bringing up Jyotin. It was she who planted in him the seeds of patriotism. He learned horse-riding from one of his uncles at a young age. He also was a very good swimmer and from his young age it was clear that fear and defeat were not for him. He joined a physical culture club and learned wrestling. He completed his training under Ferraz Miah whose account of Pathan resistance to British domination of his land inspired him greatly.

Jyotin who was fearless and strong had a heart full of compassion. When cholera broke out in his village, he organised a volunteer group to nurse the villagers. He thus showed leadership qualities right from his young age. One of the most powerful influences on Jyotin was the songs of the Bauls. The Bauls are a religio-cultural group who sang songs which depicted the glory of God and which transcended religious sectarianism. He was deeply moved by these songs and they kindled in him a deep love and respect for the teachings of the Gita. It was the Gita that taught him to meditate on the essence of this creation and the relation between God and the Universe. He was convinced that every human individual has a God-given mission to fulfil in this world and that he too was to participate in a divine work.

An incident at this period illustrates Jyotin's character. One day while at the market on the outskirts of Fort William he saw an English soldier with a stick in his hand striking at the heads of the shopkeepers and counting the strokes with malicious pleasure. Jyotin pounced on the fellow and with a few punches laid him down on the ground. The people around were flabbergasted but were also very pleased.



Jyotin was a very bright and intelligent young man; he got a job with Mr Kennedy, a barrister of Muzzafarpur in Bihar as stenographer. Mr Kennedy was pleased with his work and taught him politics, economics and the art of Government. Being deeply interested in sports and outdoor activities, he opened clubs and associations, where side by side with regular lessons in self-defence, gymnastics and athletics, organised tournaments and competitions, himself taking part in them. He was himself a good athlete and became very popular in the area. However, after his mother's death, he left the job and moved over to Calcutta.

The most powerful influence on Jyotin's life was that of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo. He came in contact with Swamiji and was fired by the determination to free India from the British rule. He also began to interact with Sister Nivedita and through her came to know Okakura; in this way his contacts increased and he had a large circle of friends.

In 1903, he met Sri Aurobindo in Calcutta. By this time a large number of physical culture clubs had cropped up all over Bengal; these were actually secret revolutionary groups and were being guided by Sri Aurobindo, Sister Nivedita and a few others.

Jyotin began working and co-ordinating the activities of these groups and he plunged himself into the struggle for the liberation of his country.

The incident, which gave Jyotindranath his widely known name, Bagha Jyotin, happened some time in 1906. He was at Koya when villagers reported to him that a tiger had come into the village and was a great danger for men and animals. Jyotin's cousin, Phanindra, set out with a gun to hunt the animal and Jyoti accompanied him with a dagger. The tiger was found but Phanindra's shot missed it and the infuriated beast fell upon Jyotin. Undaunted, Jyotin struck the animal with his dagger but the animal ferociously attacked Jyotin and inflicted several wounds upon him. It was a mortal combat which ended in the death of the tiger but not before the beast had dug claws into Jyoti's knee. He had to be carried home and then to Calcutta and it took six months before recovery. The story of Jyotin's courage went round Bengal and earned him great public acclamation. Even the Government presented him with a medal.

Jyotin plunged into action soon; he began co-ordinating the different centres of revolutionary activity. A trading centre named Chhatra Bhandar was opened which was a follow up of the movement for boycott of foreign goods. It had a dual objective-providing money for conduct of revolutionary activities and providing boarding and lodging expenses of the revolutionary workers. In a short time many other such stores came into being.

Political activities also flourished. Contact was made with the 10th Jat Regiment stationed at Fort William. The idea was to create a revolution in the Indian army but it did not take off immediately. In the meanwhile the partition of Bengal had created a violent reaction and protest meetings were held all over Bengal. Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki became martyrs in the cause of the freedom of India. Kanai Dutt and Satyen Bose were hanged by the British. The persecution of young Indians was on the increase. It was then decided to finish off Shamsul Alam, a police officer who was responsible for all the dastardly acts against Indians. On the 24th January 1910, Biren Dutt shot Shamsul Alam in the High Court. Three days later, Jyotin was arrested and a court case was foisted against him. Biren Dutt was hanged but Jyotin was released.

Jyotin then began planning for an insurrection with foreign help. In 1913 a meeting of three revolutionaries was held; they were Jyotin Mukherjee, Rashbehari Bose and Amarendranath Chatterjee. It was decided to create an uprising among the personnel of the Indian army and capture Fort William. It was also decided to take foreign and in particular German help for the import of arms.

The outbreak of the First World War hastened the process of Indo-German collaboration. It was decided to get help from abroad and at the same time hold up firms importing arms in India for use by the British army. A committee was set up to negotiate with the Germans and get shipment of arms into India in predetermined places. Contacts were made with the Germans to procure money and arms into India. The initial idea was to land the arms at Karachi and from there have them despatched to Balasore and some other places on the East Coast of India. From these centres the arms would be distributed to Calcutta and other districts. Detailed plans were also made for the uprising; villages were to



rise in revolt and military barracks were to be raided and looted. But the whole plan depended on the promised shipload of arms reaching Balasore. In the meanwhile, Jyotin left for Balasore with some of his trusted friends to await the arrival of the ship. The British had by this time got some information of the plot. There was also some delay in the arrival of the ship and the whole thing fell through. A police team was sent to Balasore and soon reinforcements joined and encircled the locality. It was the 9th of September 1915, the fateful day when the battle between the guerrillas led by Jyotin fought the British. An announcement was made in the village that some dacoits were at large and that clues leading to their arrest would bring them large rewards. The villagers unknowingly obstructed Jyotin and his party, but Jyotin refused to fire on the villagers since they were ignorant.

The British were led by Sergeant Rutherford and the district magistrate Mr Kilby. With the help of some villagers the party traced the revolutionaries. The firing began and Jyotin was hit by a bullet in his right arm; his colleague, Chittapriya was shot in the head and he died on Jyotin's lap. A bullet hit Jyotin in his stomach, but he continued firing even in that state. Another bullet struck his left hand yet he continued firing with his injured right hand. It was then that his two comrades, Niren and Monoranjan surrendered to the overwhelming British force. Jyotin and his comrade Jyotish were taken into custody. Jyotin's injuries were serious and he was sent to the Balasore hospital. An operation was performed and his life was saved for the moment. Jyotin's last statement to the British official was: "See that no injustice is done to my boys by the British Raj. Whatever has happened, I am responsible for all that."

Soon after, a stitch over the wound gave way and blood was pouring out. It is said that Jyotin himself loosened the stitch, as he did not want to face trial in the hands of the foreign rulers. Jyotin died soon after. A chapter had come to a close but the cause for which the heroes of Balasore had sacrificed their lives was sure to triumph. The battle of Balasore has become an epic and the death of Jyotin caused a spasm of sorrow throughout the ranks of Indian patriots. Sri Aurobindo said of him: "Jyotin was a wonderful man who belonged to the front rank of humanity

anywhere. He had the stature of a warrior and such beauty and strength were rare to find in one person." It is not till the Motherland reveals herself to the eye of the mind as something more than a stretch of earth or a mass of individuals, it is not till she takes shape as a great Divine and Maternal Power in a form of beauty that can dominate the mind and seize the heart that these petty fears and hopes vanish in the all-absorbing passion for the Mother and her service, and the patriotism that works miracles and saves a doomed nation is born.... Once that vision has come to the people, there can be no rest, no peace, no further slumber till the temple has been made ready, the image installed and the sacrifice offered. A great nation, which has had that vision, can never again bend its neck in subjection to the yoke of a conqueror.

**MINTO-MORLEY REFORMS**

Immediately after the Surat Congress, the British Government decided to crush the revolutionary movement-also known as the Extremist movement-led by the Indian Nationalist Congress. Sri Aurobindo was arrested in May 1908, in the Alipur Conspiracy Case as implicated in the doings of the revolutionary group led by his brother Barindra; but no evidence of any value could be established against him. At the same time, Lala Lajpat Rai was deported, Tilak was arrested on July 22 and sentenced to six years in prison and Chidambaram Pillai and other leaders from South India were arrested. The moderates in the Congress party were looking frantically for some means to separate themselves from those facing repression. H.A. Wadya, a close associate of Pherozeshah Mehta, declared that the extremists were "the worst enemies of our cause" and said "the union of these men with the Congress is the union of a diseased limb with a healthy body, and the only remedy is surgical severance, if the Congress is to be saved from death by blood poisoning." And quite inevitably, the first Resolution of the Congress in 1908 was passed to tender "its loyal homage to his Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor."

While the Congress mildly regretted the deportation and urged the Government to give the deportees a fair trial, it effectively endorsed the black laws of 1908. The resolution reads thus: "XI. Resolved-That this Congress deplores the circumstances which



have led to the passing of Act VII of 1908 and Act XIV of 1908, but having regard to their drastic character and to the fact that a sudden emergency alone can afford any justification for such exceptional legislation, this Congress expresses its earnest hope that these enactments will only have a temporary existence in the Indian Statute Book." Neither did the Congress pass any resolution on the arrest of Tilak and the stiff sentence of six years imprisonment. But the public reaction to Tilak's arrest was strong and widespread. In Bombay, there were strikes and police firing and even riots. However as a result of these arrests, the Nationalist wing of the Congress party was crushed. Though they had an emerging mass base, they had as yet a very poor organisational network. The split in Surat forced them out of the Congress before their own linkages were secure; and thereafter, government repression dispersed them before they could pose a challenge to the Congress with an alternative body.

As a result of the strong popular reaction after the Partition of Bengal, Lord Curzon was replaced by Lord Minto as the Viceroy in November 1905; he was assisted by Lord Morley as the Secretary of State. It was at this time that the British Government came up with the Minto-Morley Reforms. These reforms were first proposed in 1906 but they were finally passed by the British Parliament in 1909. In 1906, even as the Boycott struggle was raging and was being crushed with a heavy hand, the Secretary of State Morley called in the "moderate" leaders for discussions on possible reforms of the Councils. By 1907, the "moderate" leaders were quivering with anticipation at the imminent reforms and by 1908, they were joyous at the Minto-Morley proposals; they expressed "deep and general satisfaction", and praised "the high statesmanship which dictated this act of the Government", and tendered "sincere and grateful thanks" personally to Morley and Minto. These reforms were officially known as the Government of India Act 1909.

Its aim was specifically to see how the system of government could be better adapted to meet the requirements and promote the welfare of the different provinces without impairing its strength and unity. It attempted to enlarge the legislative councils and make them more representative. However, it would not be wrong to say that the Indian Councils Act was actually a farcical exercise

in mass deception. It pompously introduced the principle of "elections". What this amounted to was merely a minority of indirectly elected members in the Central Legislative Council and a majority of indirectly elected members in the Provincial Councils. The Councils themselves allowed only some powers of discussion, putting of questions, and sponsoring of resolutions.

These Councils had no control over administration or finance, let alone defence or foreign policy. The reforms were made with the express intent of isolating the growing nationalist movement. Lord Morley indeed explained this in a most telling manner to the House of Lords: "There are three classes of people whom we have to consider in dealing with a scheme of this kind. There are the extremists who nurse fanatic dreams that some day they will drive us out of India.... The second group nourishes no hopes of this sort, but hope for autonomy or self-government of the colonial species and pattern. And then the third section of this classification asks for no more than to be admitted to co-operation in our administration. I believe the effect of the Reforms has been, is being, and will be to draw the second class, who hope for colonial autonomy, into the third class, who will be content with being admitted to a fair and full co-operation. In the system of election that was introduced most cynically, a separate electorate for the Muslims was brought in. But despite all the show of reforms, no real responsibility was handed over to the Indian people. In fact, Morley was quite clear as to what his objective was. He said: "If I were attempting to set up a parliamentary system in India, or it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or indirectly to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I for one would have nothing to do with it".

But far more serious was the Anglo-Muslim rapprochement. According to M.N. Das: "the Viceroy's philosophy, in terms of his advocacy of communal electorates, was to weaken Indian nationalism and in this objective he was singularly successful for when communal conservatism united with an apprehensive imperialism, still at its height, insurmountable obstacles arose to national unity and revolutionary programmes. This was the beginning of the tragedy of Indian nationalism." As already noted Sri Aurobindo was arrested in May 1908. After a detention of one year as an undertrial prisoner in the Alipur Jail, he came out in May, 1909, to find the party organization broken, its leaders scattered by imprisonment, deportation or self-imposed exile and the party itself still existent but dumb and dispirited and incapable of any strenuous action. For almost a year he strove single-handed as the sole remaining leader of the Nationalists in India to revive the movement. He published at this time to aid his effort a weekly English paper, the Karmayogin, and a Bengali weekly, the Dharma. It will be worthwhile to note the reaction of Sri Aurobindo on the Minto-Morley reforms in contrast with the Moderate wing of the Congress party. Sri Aurobindo wrote in the Karmayogin on the 11th November 1909.



"The question of separate representation for the Mohammedan community is one of those momentous issues raised in haste by a statesman unable to appreciate the forces with which he is dealing, which bear fruit no man expected and least of all the ill-advised Frankenstein who was responsible for its creation..... The Reform scheme is the second act of insanity, which has germinated from the unsound policy of the bureaucracy. It will cast all India into the melting pot and complete the work of Partition. Our own attitude is clear. We will have no part or lot in reforms, which give no popular majority, no substantive control, no opportunity for Indian capacity and statesmanship, no seed for Indian democratic expansion. We will not for a moment accept separate electorates or separate representation, not because we are opposed to a large Mohammedan influence in popular assemblies when they come but because we will be no party to a distinction which recognizes Hindu and Mohammedan as permanently separate political units and thus precludes the growth of single and indivisible Indian nation. We oppose any such attempt at division whether it comes from an embarrassed Government seeking for political support or from an embittered Hindu community allowing the passions of the moment to obscure their vision of the future."

Again, he wrote:

> *"But the country, the swadesh, which must be the base and fundament of our nationality, is India, a country where Mohammedan and Hindu live intermingled and side by side. …The Mohammedans base their separateness and their refusal to regard themselves as Indians first and Mohammedans*

*afterwards on the existence of great Mohammedan nations to which they feel themselves more akin, in spite of our common birth and blood, than to us. Hindus have no such resource. For good or evil, they are bound to the soil and to the soil alone. They cannot deny their Mother nor can they mutilate her. Our ideal therefore is an Indian Nationalism, largely Hindu in its spirit and traditions, because the Hindu made the land and the people and persists by the greatness of his past, his civilization and his culture and his invincible virility, in holding it, but wide enough also to include the Moslem and his culture and traditions and absorb them into itself."*

Regarding the Hindu-Muslim problem, he wrote:

*"Of one thing we may be certain, that Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be effected by political adjustments or Congress flatteries. It must be sought deeper down in the heart and in the mind, for where the causes of disunion are there the remedies must be sought. We shall do well in trying to solve the problem to remember that misunderstanding is the most fruitful cause of our differences, that love compels love and that strength conciliates the strong. We must strive to remove the causes of misunderstanding by a better mutual knowledge and sympathy; we must extend the unfaltering love of the patriot to our Mussulman brother, remembering always that in him too Narayana dwells and to him too our Mother has given a permanent place in her bosom; but we must cease to approach him falsely or flatter out of a selfish weakness and cowardice. We believe this to be the only practical way of dealing with the difficulty. As a political question the Hindu-Muslim problem does not interest us at all, as a national problem it is of supreme importance. We shall make it a main part of our work to place Mohammed and Islam in a new light before our readers to spread juster views of Mohammedan history and civilization, to appreciate the Musulman's place in our national development and the means of harmonizing his communal life with our own, not ignoring the difficulties that stand in the way of the possibilities of brotherhood and mutual understanding. Intellectual sympathy can only draw together, the sympathy of the heart can alone unite. But the one is a good preparation for the other."*



In the twelve months' detention in the Alipur Jail, Sri Aurobindo had spent his time entirely in the practice of Yoga; his inner spiritual life had become the sole preoccupation. In February 1910, as the result of an adesh, he withdrew to a secret retirement at Chandernagore and in the beginning of April sailed for Pondicherry in French India. In 1911, the British conceded on the partition question, and Bengal was re-united. Instead of claiming a victory for the people's six years of struggle, the Congress chose this as yet another occasion to extol the virtues of British rule: A Congress spokesman declared that "every heart is beating in unison with reverence and devotion to the British Throne, overflowing with revived confidence in and gratitude towards British statesmanship". Let us now take stock of the results of the Swadeshi movement. The Swadeshi movement was idealistic on one side-no great movement can go without an ideal-but at the same time it was perfectly practical in its aims and methods. The effects of the Swadeshi movement can be summed up thus:

- It destroyed the Moderate reformist politics and spread the revolutionary mentality and the ideal of independence;
- It laid the foundations of an Industrial India-not of course wholly industrial-for it recognized the importance of the agricultural class.
- it brought in the commercial classes and the whole educated middle class into the political field-and not the middle class only, while Moderation had touched only a small fringe;
- It had no time to bring the peasantry, but it had begun the work and Gandhi only carried it farther.
- It laid down a method of agitation which Gandhi took up and continued with three or four startling additions, khaddar, Hindiism, Satyagraha-getting beaten with joy, Khilafat, Harijan etc. With the departure of Sri Aurobindo to Pondicherry and the imprisonment of Tilak, the second phase of the Freedom Struggle ended.

The movement of 1905 in Bengal pursued a quite new conception of the nation not merely as a country, but a soul, a psychological, almost a spiritual being and, even when acting

from economical and political motives, it sought to dynamise them by this subjective conception and to make them instruments of self-expression rather than objects in themselves. We must not forget, however, that in the first stages these movements followed in their superficial thought the old motives of an objective and mostly political self-consciousness. SriAurobindo

**THE HOME RULE MOVEMENT**

In 1914 the First World War broke out. The British were deeply involved in this war fighting a life and death battle against the Germans. As we have seen in an earlier chapter, there was some kind of collaboration between the revolutionaries and the Germans just before the outbreak of the First World War. But it ended in failure with the death of Jyotin Mukherjee. With this we come to the end of the Second phase of the Freedom Movement. The next period from 1915 to 1920 may be described as an interlude. Mrs. Annie Besant and Tilak dominated this period.

In 1914, after six years detention in the Mandalay jail, Tilak was released. His solitary detention in Mandalay had left a deep imprint on Tilak's personality. Tilak who was always a practical politician emerged a more cautious man. As seen earlier, the Congress had split in 1907 at the Surat session. But Tilak was not happy about the split. As remarked by Sri Aurobindo: "to no one was the catastrophe so great a blow as to Mr Tilak. He did not like the do-nothingness of the Congress but he valued it both as a national fact and for its unrealized possibilities". He had realized the futility of revolutionary violence in the then prevailing conditions in India; he was therefore prepared to accept self-government within the British Empire as the country's immediate political goal. Yet despite his changed political outlook the Moderates continued to distrust him. Realizing his ineffectiveness outside the Congress mainstream, he set about building a strong political base. His programme consisted of four planks: National education, Swadeshi, Boycott and Swaraj. Tilak was warmly acclaimed by the Bombay Provincial Conference in 1915 and electrified politics by his proposal of Home Rule. He set up a Home Rule League for the purpose of propagating the idea. At the same time Annie Besant also proposed the Home Rule and



created her own Home Rule League. Thus there were two Home Rule Leagues existing at the same time. These were set up in April and September 1916 respectively. Her slogan 'England's difficulty is India's opportunity' became a catchphrase in the national armoury. The educated middle class all over the country was touched by her powerful oratory and bold demand of Dominion Status on the basis of equality and rallied to the League.

Annie Besant who was of predominantly Irish lineage was a renowned theosophist. In 1889, she enrolled as a member of the Theosophical Society. Devoted and diligent, she was chosen President of the Society after the death of Col Olcott. Her interest in theosophy and Hinduism brought her to India in 1893. She lectured on Hinduism and glorified it as the fount of all religions and the cradle of civilization. Annie Besant entered the political scene in 1913 when she publicly recommended that the House of Commons set up a Standing Committee for Indian affairs. She pleaded that India be recognized as a nation and be given self-government. She started two papers: the weekly Commonwealth and the daily New India. In 1915, at Bombay she enunciated her plan to organize a Home Rule League. This was established in September 1916 after she failed to persuade Tilak to combine the League he had already established.

Tilak who wanted to join the Congress found it difficult because of the distrust of the Congress leaders. It was Annie Besant who finally persuaded them to come to reconciliation with him; the death of Gokhale and Pherozeshah Mehta made things easier. Along with Tilak she played no small role in bringing about some kind of Hindu-Muslim unity in the Lucknow Congress in 1916.

The Lucknow Pact made in December 1916 was an agreement made by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League and adopted by the Congress at its Lucknow session on December 29 and by the League on Dec. 31, 1916. The meeting at Lucknow marked the reunion of the moderate and radical wings of the Congress and was dominated by Tilak. The pact dealt both with the structure of the government of India and with the relation of the Hindu and Muslim communities. Four-fifths of the provincial and central legislatures were to be elected on a broad franchise, and half the executive council members, including those

of the central executive council, were to be Indians elected by the councils themselves. Except for the provision for the central executive, these proposals were largely embodied in the Government of India Act of 1919. The Congress also agreed to separate electorates for Muslims in provincial council elections Apparently this pact paved the way for Hindu-Muslim cooperation and unity. However, there are many who feel that this was a wrong step and was in fact the first step in creating a permanent division between the Hindus and Muslims. The later history of India amply proves this. Sri Aurobindo had been warning of the dangers of communal representation. Here is what he wrote in 1909. "The question of separate representation for the Mohammedan community is one of those momentous issues raised in haste by a statesman unable to appreciate the forces with which he is dealing, which bear fruit no man expected and least of all the ill-advised Frankenstein who was responsible for its creation.... We will not for a moment accept separate electorates or separate representation, not because we are opposed to a large Mohammedan influence in popular assemblies when they come but because we will be no party to a distinction which recognizes Hindu and Mohammedan as permanently separate political units and thus precludes the growth of single and indivisible Indian nation.

We oppose any such attempt at division whether it comes from an embarrassed Government seeking for political support or from an embittered Hindu community allowing the passions of the moment to obscure their vision of the future." Much later Sri Aurobindo wrote: "What has created the Hindu-Muslim split was not Swadeshi, but the acceptance of the communal principle by the Congress, (here Tilak made his great blunder), and the further attempt by the Khilafat movement to conciliate them and bring them in on wrong lines. The recognition of that communal principle at Lucknow made them permanently a separate political entity in India which ought never to have happened."

At about the same time, most ironically, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, too opposed the idea of a separate electorate for the Muslims. In the words of Krishna Iyer: "He opposed the Muslim League's stand of favouring separate electorate for the Muslims and described it "as a poisonous dose to divide the nation against itself." He collaborated with the Congress and actively worked against the Muslim communalists, calling them enemies of the nation. He had been much influenced by the speeches of Naoroji, Mehta and Gokhale whom he adored. Naoroji as Congress President had emphasised the need for "a thorough union of all the people" and pleaded with Hindus and Muslims to "sink or swim together. Without this union, all efforts will be in vain", he added. Jinnah was in full agreement with this view. He deprecated the contrary separatist policy advocated by the League".



There was a certain amount of rivalry between the two Home Leagues, which made each plough their lonely furrow. But before long they joined together in a gesture of reciprocity. Many others joined including Jawaharlal Nehru. Tilak's area of operation was mainly in Maharashtra and Karnataka, while Mrs Besant's was generally over the South and in some pockets of Bihar, Bengal, Gujarat and Sind. The objective of the movement was to attain a system of self-government within the British Empire. The agitation made rapid strides during 1916-17 and while broadly active in many parts of the country registered noticeable progress in the South. Both Tilak and Mrs Besant engaged in extensive tours and took up educational and social work with the intention to inform and agitate the masses and involve them in the freedom struggle. Their attempt was to capture the Congress. The Home rulers argued that India's contribution to the World War should be rewarded with some political progress.

At the same time the Russian Revolution and President Wilson's suggestion for the formation of the League of Nations gave added momentum to the demand for Home Rule. The British Government reacted in typical fashion-stern handling and suppression of the Movement terming it as sedition. A case was instituted against Tilak; he was served a notice to pay a sum of Rs 40,000. However on appeal the decision was rescinded by the High Court. In May 1916, Mrs Annie Besant forfeited her security on her paper New India.

Meanwhile all attempts to persuade her to abandon the Home Rule campaign and return to England failed. On her declining to do so, she and her assistants were interned without trial. She thus

emerged as the country's foremost freedom fighter and was released in September 1917.Later in the year she was rewarded with the Presidentship of the Congress.

The British seeing that the Home Rule Movement was gaining tremendous popularity put forward a proposal to placate the Moderates within the Congress. They proposed to grant responsible government and put forward a concrete scheme for Reform in the August 1917 Declaration. In the light of this gesture, the Home Rule League decided to suspend the agitation and sent instead an all-India deputation to meet the Viceroy. The release from jail of Mrs Besant was a landmark in her career. Instead of capitalizing on the release, within a year she succeeded in completely isolating herself from the various groups in the Congress and thus forfeited all claims to leadership of the nationalist movement and the Congress.

Two reasons may be adduced for this. One was that the United Front she had cobbled up of the Moderates and the Extremists was basically unstable and secondly she vigourously opposed the Passive Resistance, which then had become the chief plank of the Congress. Her inconstancy and the lack of a definite programme finally made the Congress reject her leadership. Tilak too had by this time virtually relinquished his authority; thus the Congress was almost leaderless and the Home Rule Movement had weakened beyond any hope of revival. This vacuum was filled up by Gandhi and with his advent started the next phase of the Freedom Movement.

The Home Rule Movement was not a great success. However it contributed in some ways to the Nationalist movement. Firstly, it was due to its agitation that the British promised to advance towards self-rule. Secondly, it was for the first time that there was an all-India movement with the exception of Punjab and Bengal. In Punjab, the Arya Samaj rejected the Theosophical movement of Mrs Besant and in Bengal the leadership of C.R. Das was too powerful to make a dent. Probably what led to the failure of the movement was the ambivalence in accepting passive resistance, which then was the only available plan of action. Its failure prepared the ground for the taking over of the Congress by Gandhi.

# 4

# Bipin Chandra Pal and His Extrimist Movements

Prior to the dawn of the twentieth century the prospect of a revolution in India figured in nationalist thinking primarily as an event that would ensure a greater degree of Indian representation within the British system of rule. In 1878, an editorial in the Hindu Patriot observed:

Our rulers may rest assured that the symptoms of dissatisfaction which they notice among the princes and people of India are no symptoms of a wish for a political revolution. Far from it. Both the princes and people of India fully appreciate the order which the English have introduced, the protection and security which they have given, and the principles of progress which they have instilled into life. Romesh Chandra Dutt, President of the Indian National Congress in 1890, declared that the people of India were not fond of sudden changes and revolutions. They wished to strengthen British rule and to bring it more in touch with the people. Their most cherished desire, he said, was to see some Indian members in the Secretary of State's Council and in the Viceroy's Executive Council so that they could represent the interests of the Indian people in the discussion of every important administrative question.

Ananda Mohan Bose, President of the 1898 Congress, looked hopefully for the cooperation of the British rulers in the fight against the evils of economic backwardness, obscurantism, ignorance and administrative shortcomings of the bureaucratic system and declared that the educated classes were the friends

and not the foes of England-her natural and necessary allies. Even Surendra Nath Banerjee pleaded for the permanence of British rule in India and proclaimed that the object of the Indian people was not the suppression of British rule in India but to work with unwavering loyalty to the British connection, for the broadening of its basis, the liberalizing of its spirit, the ennobling of its character and placing it on the unchangeable foundation of a nation's affection.

For two decades after its formation in 1885, the Indian National Congress developed along the path laid down by its founders and remained essentially a moderate political body looking upon British rule almost as a dispensation of Providence. During these twenty years the Congressmen did not fight for self-government in any form but only wanted to assert their right to greater participation in the administration. They were by no means against British rule. They merely desired, as Michael Edwardes pointed out, the status that their education had fitted them for and that Britain had said would one day be their reward. Their political ideas were not revolutionary. They did not agitate for India's freedom, but only for a few crumbs of the cake.

And as they wanted to get their grievances-grievances not of the people of India, but of a minority of a minority-redressed through prayers and petitions or mendicancy, as it was called, they came to be known as the moderates. However, according to Will Durant it was in 1905 that the Indian Revolution began. It began as a local movement against the partition of Bengal but like a tiny brook it gradually widened, swollen by affluents and tributaries and becoming a mighty torrent of nationalism before merging into the broad river of India's national struggle for freedom. The national upheaval following the partition of Bengal not only aroused the dormant political consciousness of the people but also gave new orientation and a definite shape to the spirit of nationalism. It brought into prominence a new means to fight the British, which was remote from all the previous methods of political agitation and bore an essentially modern and economic character-the weapons of Boycott and Swadeshi, that is, refusal to buy foreign goods and the promotion of indigenous industry. Indeed, as pointed out by Surendra Nath Banerjee in 1906,



Swadeshism was not merely an economic or political movement but a comprehensive movement coextensive with the whole of national life-the shibboleth of our unity and industrial and political salvation. Describing the Swadeshi Movement as a landmark in the history of India's struggle for freedom, Gokhale also said that for the first time since British rule began, all sections of the Indian people, without any distinction of caste and creed, had been moved by a common impulse, and that at its touch, old barriers had been thrown down, personal jealousies had vanished and all controversies were hushed.

The revolutionary forces which now gathered for a new phase of struggle derived inspiration from the cult of nationalism preached by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Swami Vivekananda and others during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In his immortal novel Ananda Math or Abode of Bliss, published in 1882, Bankim Chandra put the soul-stirring cry of Bande Mataram or Hail to the Mother into the mouths of the rebel Sanyasins in their revolt against the tyranny of the Muslim rulers. This cry of Bande Mataram as conceived in the Ananda Math, became the hymn of nationalism in India's struggle for freedom. It was sung by countless voices in the historic Town Hall meeting in Calcutta when the resolution on the Boycott and Swadeshi was promulgated on 7 August 1905. The greatest influence of the spirit of Bande Mataram was on the new school of Left-wing nationalism, known as the extremists in opposition to the moderates, which emerged on the Indian political scene as a repercussion of the Swadeshi Movement. However, it should be noted that while this new school, associated especially with the leadership of Aurobindo Ghosh and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, emerged in the last decade of the nineteenth century, it could not play a decisive role until the situation became ripe after 1905. Even as early as 1893-94, Aurobindo described the Indian National Congress as an 'unnational body' because its policy was divorced from the realities of Indian political life. The aims of the Congress, he said, were mistaken and the spirit in which it proceeded towards their accomplishment was not the spirit of sincerity and the methods it had chosen were not the right methods and the leaders in whom it trusted were not the right sort of men to be leaders.

In the early 1890s a new political force had also emerged in Maharashtra under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak who lost faith in the mendicant policy of the Congress leaders and sought to nationalize the 'unnational' movement by infusing in it a militant spirit and bringing political questions to the masses. In fact, while Aurobindo put nationalism on the high pedestal of religion, Tilak brought it to the masses, thus making it a formidable force in India's struggle for freedom. They dealt a death-blow to the old Congress ideal of compromise and conciliation and entered on a path of militant and uncompromising struggle against British imperialism. Thus the seed of nationalism which had been sown in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and drew its sustenance from the spirit of sacrifice preached by Swami Vivekananda on the basis of the philosophical teachings of Vedanta and Gita and the religious devotion to motherland expounded by Bankim Chandra in Bande Mataram burst forth in 1905 and began to shoot and sprout with astounding vitality.

The extremist party which thus came into being under the leadership of Aurobindo and Tilak differed in fundamental points from that which had hitherto been followed by the moderate leaders of the Indian National Congress. And as the Swadeshi Movement outstripped its original limitations and as eminent nationalists like Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and G.S. Khaparde joined its ranks, the extremist party soon became an all-India revolutionary organization. It may be noted here that during the last decade of the nineteenth century, Bipin Chandra Pal did not share the extremist views of Aurobindo and Tilak. He held that the Indians were loyal to the British because they believed that God himself had led the British to India to help it in working out its salvation. Their loyalty, he declared, was so natural, unconscious and automatic that no effort was needed on the part of the Government to train the Indians in the virtue of allegiance. But when the British Government, in total disregard of the popular will decided to partition Bengal, his illusions were destroyed and he fell in line with Aurobindo and Tilak.

The political changes and transformations through which Bipin Chandra Pal himself passed were typical of what was taking place all over India, and brought into sharp relief the two political parties labelled as moderates and extremists. 5 The main difference between the moderates and the extremists lay in the concept of an Indian political goal and the method to be adopted for achieving it. The 'old guard' of the Congress, who had built their habitation away on the horizon, were extremely moderate in their demands. They were imbued with the spirit, principles and the methods of mid-Victorian liberalism and bent on winning not complete self-government but only piecemeal reforms. They were careful not to pitch their demands too high. Some of them might have cherished in their heart of hearts the goal of self-government, but almost all of them wanted to work with least resistance and therefore framed their demands for reforms on such moderate and cautious lines as not to arouse any serious opposition.



They were confirmed believers in the British sense of justice and fair play and followed the method of prayers, petitions and representations in order to get their grievances redressed. The extremists, on the other hand, looked upon the British rule as an unmitigated evil and believed that Swaraj (complete independence) was the birthright of every Indian, not a sort of gift to be doled out by the British Government. They were convinced that the method of political mendicancy would never bring India near Swaraj. What India needed was to create her own strength so that Britain could be compelled to part with power. They approached the question of violence and non-violence purely from the standpoint of political pragmatism and expediency.

Aurobindo, for example, never mixed up ordinary ethics with politics, which he believed had its own ethics the ethics of the Kshatriya, not of the Brahmin. He pointed out that to impose the Brahminical virtue of 'saintly sufferance' in politics was to preach Varnasankara or confusion of duties which was not conducive to political advancement. Non-violence, he declared, was not a speciality of Indian genius.

The most significant development of the militant nationalist movement was the activities of the revolutionaries who set out for different parts of the world with the aims of establishing international contacts, spreading anti-British propaganda, explaining India's aspirations and securing foreign help for the overthrow of British rule in India. That even the orthodox

nationalist leaders felt the necessity of such activities abroad was evident from the fact that Dadabhai Naoraji, the veteran Congress leader who once appealed to the British rulers not to drive the educated Indians into opposition instead of drawing them to their side, placed the case of India before the Congress of Socialists in 1904 at Amsterdam. One of the earliest Indians to achieve concrete results in organizing fellow revolutionaries abroad was Shyamji Krishna Varma who founded the Indian Home Rule Society in London in 1905 and brought out a journal called the Indian Sociologist. Other prominent Indian revolutionaries who collected round Shyamji were Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, Hardayal, Madan Lal Dhingra, Sardar Singh Rana and Madam Bhikhaji Rustam K.R. Cama.

Madam Cama left India in 1902 and dedicated her life to the achievement of India's freedom by means of revolutionary propaganda in Europe and America. She represented India at the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart in August 1907, and delivered a brilliant speech highlighting the evils of British rule in India. Describing the continuance of British rule as positively disastrous and extremely injurious to the best interests of India, she appealed to all lovers of freedom all over the world to cooperate in freeing India from the bondage of slavery. She concluded her address by unfurling the national flag, a tricolour in green, yellow and red, and earned the undying reputation as the 'Mother of Indian Revolution'. While Shyamji Krishna Varma and Madam Cama were busy in Europe, their activities inspired the Indians in America who had migrated to that country after being unable to earn the bare minimum of livelihood in India to start the Ghadr Movement. They formed the Ghadr Party in 1913 and brought out a weekly journal, Ghadr, in Urdu, Marathi and Gurumukhi languages. The aims of the party, as proclaimed by its founders, were the overthrow of British imperialism in India and the establishment of a national republic based on freedom and equality. These aims, it was further proclaimed, could be achieved only by an armed revolution.

When the war broke out between England and Germany in 1914, the Indian revolutionaries abroad seized the opportunity to enlist the sympathy and support of the Germans for India's



freedom. The Germans were equally anxious to exploit the Indian unrest and anti-British activities of the Indian revolutionaries abroad. Assured of German sympathy and support, the Indian revolutionaries set up an organization in Berlin known as the Indian Independence Committee. The committee lost no time in inviting all revolutionaries in India and abroad to formulate a common plan of action and to send men and money to India to prepare the ground for the overthrow of British rule in India. Thus, with the outbreak of World War I, the Indian revolutionary movement merged itself with the march of events all over the world and entered into an era of great and far reaching changes.

According to R. Palme Dutt, it was the shock of World War I, with the lasting blow to the whole structure of imperialism, and the opening of the world revolutionary wave that followed in 1917 and after, which released the first mass movement of revolt in India. As the war came to a close and as mankind awaited the new years of peace, a shadow lay across the Peace Conference at Versailles-the shadow of revolution. In a memorandum to the Peace Conference Lloyd George pointed out that there was a deep sense not only of discontent but also of anger and revolt among workers against pre-war conditions.

The whole existing order-in its political, social and economic aspects-was being questioned by the masses of the population from one end of Europe to the other and the continent was filled with a spirit of revolution. Bolshevik imperialism, he averred, did not merely menace the states on Russia's borders but threatened the whole of Asia and was as near to America as it was to France. He warned that there could be no peace and security as long as the scourge of Bolshevism threatened the world. A similar foreboding about the coming shadows of Bolshevism also troubled the mind of President Woodrow Wilson during his journey to France on board the George Washington. Bolshevism, he realized, was reaction against the way in which the world had worked and it was to be the victorious powers' business at the Peace Conference to fight for a new order. Indeed, after the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917, when the revolutionary wave began to extend in varying forms and degrees to the countries of Asia and Europe, the entire programme of Wilsonian principles to

make the world safe for democracy seemed to recede into the background.

A choice of greater magnitude now confronted mankind, the choice between Wilson and Lenin. Wilson represented the path of bourgeois democratic reform while maintaining the essence of imperialism and the class ownership of the means of production... The path of Lenin was the path of the mass revolution against imperialism, of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the imperialist countries and of the democratic dictatorship of the workers and of peasantry in the colonial and backward countries, of the liberation of the colonial peoples, of the collective organization of societies... The issue of these paths was the issue of the post war epoch. It was the beginning of the epoch marked by the awakening of the overwhelming majority of the human race to revolution and an advance of national revolutionary movements all over the world-in Central and South America, in the Near and Middle East, in Africa, in China and in India.

In India, the aftermath of the war had not only brought into being new forces which were to transform the struggle for freedom from the concern of a minority group into a mighty national upheaval but had also drawn her into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement. And this was a phenomenon which was of profound significance not to India alone but to the colonial world as a whole.

Writing on the significance of an Indian revolution, a Soviet commentator, Kerzhentsev, observed that the liberation of India from British domination would be a signal for all the Asian countries to take up the struggle against imperialism. It would ignite revolutions throughout the entire colonial world-Mesopotamia, Syria, Arabia, South Africa, Egypt, China, Tibet, Persia-all these countries, he said, would follow the Indian example. But the prospect of a revolution in India had been the subject of discussion long before the outbreak of World War I. As early as 1853 Marx and Engels began to evince such keen interest in India that between 1853 and 1857 as many as twenty-three articles by Marx and eight by Engels were devoted to the exposure of the British imperialist misrule which, Marx said, was laying the foundations of a socio-economic revolution in India.



According to Marx, in causing this social revolution in India, England was actuated by the vilest interests and foolish in her manner of enforcing them. But, he said, that was not the real question. The fundamental question was-could mankind fulfil its destiny without a revolution 'in the social state of Asia'? If not, whatever might have been the crime of England, she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution. Again, in a letter to Karl Kautsky in 1882, Marx expressed the opinion that while the countries occupied by European populations-Canada, the Cape, Australia-would all become independent, the countries inhabited by native populations and subjugated by Europeans-India, Africa, the Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish possessions-must be taken over by the proletariat and led as rapidly as possible towards independence. Although Marx could not predict how this process would develop, he had no doubt that India would make a revolution. He further held that as the proletariat in process of emancipation could not conduct any colonial wars, the revolution would have to be allowed to run its course, bringing in its train all sorts of destruction. But that sort of thing, Marx averred, was inescapable in all revolutions.

Lenin's interest in the Indian nationalist movement dates from the dawn of the twentieth century when in an article entitled 'Inflammable Material in World Politics' he declared that in India the proletariat had already developed a conscious political mass struggle and that being the case, 'the Russian style British regime' in India was doomed. The class-conscious European workers, he said, had comrades in Asia and their number would grow with every passing day and hour. Five years later, in 1913, Lenin reiterated that everywhere in Asia a mighty democratic movement was growing, spreading and gaining in strength.

There the bourgeoisie was siding with the people against forces of reaction. Hundreds of millions of people in these countries, who had reliable allies in all 'civilized countries', were awakening to life, light and liberty and no force on earth could prevent their victory. When the war broke out, Lenin was convinced that its most important effect would be the immediate emancipation of the colonial countries, including India, which would ultimately bring about a worldwide proletarian revolution. The war, he

hoped, would sever the last chain that bound the workers to their masters their slavish submission to the imperialist state. And the last limitation of the proletariats' philosophy, their cringing to the narrowness of the national state, would be overcome.

From the Marxian angle, therefore, the post-war situation in India presented all the conditions in which a proletarian revolution seemed just around the corner. But although this was a highly exaggerated view of the actual state of affairs, there is some truth in the fact that the war had not only drawn India into the world revolutionary movement and projected her into the company of other colonial countries, but had also given the national movement a unique mass dimension and a revolutionary context, however diminutive. At the close of the war, while the world 'was sitting on an anxious seat', India had been the scene of a great liberation movement and a national awakening. To this movement, in combination with the emergence of Gandhi on the one hand and with the new ethos produced by the October Revolution on the other, Indian politics of the post-war years owed its most distinctive character.

After the war, nationalism in India emerged with a new character, giving rise to new leaders who were to conduct the fight both against the British in India and the legislators in Westminster. The struggle for freedom was no longer to be fought in the obscurity with which the nineteenth century and Britain's international prestige had cloaked India. It was now to take place under the bright lights of a growing world interest. By the time the war came to a close, Indian blood, said Annie Besant, had soaked the soils of Flanders, Gallipoli, Egypt and Mesopotamia. The England that had welcomed Garibaldi, the England that had sheltered Mazzini, could not but give the same welcome to Indians who had fought for the same cause.

The war had brought about a truce in the nationalist movement and India placed all her resources at the disposal of Britain in her hour of need. The Indian soldiers' bravery in various theatres of war in Europe, Africa and Western Asia won them the gratitude of Britain and the admiration of the world. In fact, India incurred such an enormous cost in men and material that she was now in an economic crisis of the most serious magnitude. India had to



incur this enormous economic burden largely because of the fact that Indian policies at the time were determined by the British. Moreover, Indians were tricked into believing that self-determination for all people was the battle cry and the war was being fought to make the world safe for democracy. They naively believed that helping the Allies might lead to a victory, which would ultimately bring some tangible reward for India.

It was with this fond hope that Annie Besant, presiding over the Calcutta Congress in 1917, secured the adoption of a resolution expressing deep loyalty and profound attachment to the Throne and firm resolve to stand by the British Empire at all hazards and at all costs. Such expression of loyalty found another occasion when a Congress delegation to London with Lala Lajpat Rai, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Lord Satyendra Prasad Sinha and others as its members sent a letter to the Secretary of State reiterating their conviction that Indians would readily and willingly cooperate with the British and place all resources of their country at His Majesty's disposal for a victory in the war against Germany. Thus, the Congress moderates, who were then in control of the party machine, proclaimed their loyalty to the British and support to the Allies in resolutions at each of the Congress sessions during the war. And when the war came to a close in 1918, they congratulated the British Government on its successful termination.

Little did they realize that protestations of self-government and democracy were not meant to be applied to the Indians, that the Allies never intended self-government to anyone outside Europe, where the splitting up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire demanded some high-flown justification. At the Lucknow Congress in 1916, Surendra Nath Banerjee declared that the object of the war was to vindicate the sanctity of treaty obligations-to uphold the sacredness of scraps and bits of paper. The moral law, he said, did not work by latitudes and longitudes.

In 1922, in a speech at his trial, Gandhi also admitted that in all their efforts at service to the allied victory, the Congress leaders were actuated by the belief that it would be possible by such service to gain the status of full equality for their country. But subsequent events were to make a mockery of such optimism. In the face of the German peril, the British Government, in order to

make sure of Indian cooperation, had held out specious promises of constitutional reform and self-government for the Indians. It was clear, as Charles Roberts admitted, that India was no longer a mere dependent of but a partner in the Empire and as such the problems of the Government of India Act had to be looked at from an altogether different angle. But with the termination of the war such professions of partnership in spirit began to wear thin. Official British opinion now professed thanks that by helping the Allies India had only expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the King for the blessings of British rule in India.

Disillusionment was followed by discontent and unrest. The Indian soldiers' brilliant performance on the battlefield not only gave the people an unprecedented sense of national honour but the near collapse of the Allies in the face of the German challenge also exploded the myth of the invincibility of British arms. The Indian soldiers who had been hastily demilitarized lest they turned their weapons against their British masters, now came back to their villages carrying with them new grievances and new ideas which they had picked up from foreign lands. Their experience abroad taught them to shake off their traditional submissiveness. As a result, the placidity of the countryside was disturbed and discontented peasantry began to rise in revolt against the intolerable conditions of life.

The termination of the war had also brought back the old administrators and with them returned the worst features of British rule in India. These administrators, who treated the war as an unhappy interlude in the happy superiority of British life in India, once again decided to carry on the administration by means of terror, internment and repression. But despite the Sedition Acts, which followed the Rowlatt Report, terrorism and revolt began to spread like wildfire.

To roll back the tide of unrest among almost all sections of Indian people, the Government adopted extremely repressive measures, resulting in a virtual reign of terror all over the country and culminating in the Jallianwalabagh massacre and the barbarous enforcement of martial law in Punjab. The Defence of India Act, which was passed on 18 March 1915 to meet the new situation arising out of the war, was now being abused to terrorize the



people and crush their normal political activities. To replace the Defence of India Act, which was to cease to be operative at the end of the war, two more bills were prepared by the Government on the basis of the report of the Rowlatt Committee, which was appointed to investigate the growing spate of revolutionary movement and to recommend appropriate legislative measures to quell it. Of these bills only one was actually passed into law, namely the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act 1919, which provided for summary trial of political offences by a special court empowered to meet in camera and take into consideration evidence not admissible under the Indian Evidence Act.

There could be no appeal against the decisions of this court. The Act also empowered provincial governments to order any person, on mere suspicion, to furnish any security or to notify his residence or to reside in a particular area or to abstain from any specified act or finally to report himself to the police. Provincial governments were also given wide powers to search any place and to arrest any person without warrant and to keep detainees confined in whatever place and under whatever conditions as it may specify. In addition to these 'lawless laws' numerous other restrictive measures were taken by the Government to suppress the civil and political liberties of the people. The extent of such repressive measures can be gauged from the fact that by the end of 1919 as many as 350 printing presses had been seized, 300 newspapers closed down, 500 books proscribed and thousands of persons interned under the Defence of India Act. But despite such ruthless repression, which in the words of an Englishman, Mr Hyndman, stood almost on a level with the outrages committed by Germany in Belgium, France and Poland, popular unrest began to assume menacing proportions and underground revolutionary groups began to spring up all over the country. Moreover, as already noted above, many revolutionaries left India to organize revolutionary groups in various parts of the world-in Berlin, New York, London, Kabul, Japan and Mexico.

On 20 August 1917, Edwin Montagu announced in the House of Commons that the policy of the British Government was that of increasing the association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing

institutions in India. The progress of this policy, he added, could only be achieved by successive stages and the British Government in India would determine the time and the measure of each advance. Although this declaration indicated a radical change in the Government's policy towards India, neither this declaration nor the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms, on the basis of which the Government of India Act 1919, was passed, could stem the tide of simmering discontent. Whatever good effect this declaration might have had was more than offset by the repressive policy of the Government of India in crushing what it called 'criminal conspiracies'.

Thus, while the British at Westminster were envisaging some delegation of powers and gradual development of self-governing institutions in India, the British in Delhi were strengthening their authority with all the apparatus of oppression trial without jury and summary internment. Indians naturally saw this as giving with one hand and slapping down with the other. And it was at this time that Gandhi came. He came from South Africa where he had devoted his services to British imperialism and won a war medal from his 'beloved' Queen for his services to the British forces in fighting against the 'uncivilized' Africans in the Boer War of 1899. A worshipper of British imperialism all through his life, Gandhi made no mistake in impressing his masters that he was Kipling's Gunga Din in flesh and blood. Gandhi was born in Porbandar in the state of Gujarat on 2 October 1869, and was educated in law at University College, London. In 1891, after having been admitted to the British bar, Gandhi returned to India and attempted to establish a law practice in Bombay, with little success.

Two years later an Indian firm with interests in South Africa retained him as legal adviser in its office in Durban, where he later became the first so-called 'coloured' lawyer admitted to the Supreme Court. He was as briefless in South Africa as in India. Gandhi came to India and by a bizarre quirk of destiny merged himself with Indian history, ruling the course of events in India like the worst dictator ever known to Indians to the extent that soon he acquired for himself the title of Mahatma (Great Soul) and could do whatever he liked to lead the malleable Indians in one



mass movement after another, only to withdraw whenever they actually threatened British rule. According to Subhas Chandra Bose's daughter Anita Bose Pfaff, 'Very often Gandhi is portrayed as a saint, which he was not at all. He was a lawyer who really knew how to work the system and manipulate people.'

Propaganda has always been the most effective tool of dictators, and Gandhi was no exception. Nothing could be farther from the truth than that he fought against Apartheid or racial oppression, although this was what he wanted the people to believe. In fact he was all in favour of the continuation of White domination and the oppression of Blacks in South Africa. A hypocrite to the core, he appeared to share the living standards of the typical Indian poor villager in his Sabaramati Ashram of which the annual expenditure was 100,000 rupees, which is a huge amount of money even now, after more than fifty years. Gandhi was famous for his humility in insisting on travelling third-class by train.

To get a seat in a crowded third-class carriage was difficult, so when Gandhi and his entourage travelled, the whole train was paid for to ensure Gandhi's comfort. For the luxury of Gandhi's travelling in third-class train compartments, the Congress had to pay a huge amount of money for air-conditioning the compartment, installing new furnishing, and decorating with luxurious things like highly expensive Persian carpets. To put it bluntly, he was nothing short of a British spy and a saboteur of Indian aspirations. Obviously his British masters were more than pleased with their trusted 'agent' and whenever they arrested Gandhi, he was 'jailed' in the monarchical palace of the legendary Aga Khan. The whole history of the Bambata Rebellion in South Africa reveals his barbarous war crimes; crimes of one who always posed as an unwavering protagonist of the lofty ideals of non-violence and truth. But, as has rightly been said by 'the father of the Indian Constitution' B.R. Ambedkar, 'If a man with God's name on his tongue and sword under his armpit deserved the appellation of a Mahatma, then Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was a Mahatma.'

Ambedkar also accused Gandhi of exploiting social problems for political gain, while actually preventing social change. George Orwell saw Gandhi as an 'enemy' to a 'nationalist'. It is perhaps

the greatest irony of Indian history that India could have won freedom much earlier than 1947 had not the 'father of the nation' taken the reigns of India's nationalist movement. No wonder that the worthy disciple of the worthy master, Jawaharlal Nehru hailed the arrival of his master in the following words: He was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths; like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes; like a whirlwind that upset many things, but most of all the working of people's minds. He did not descend from the top; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India speaking their language and incessantly drawing attention to their appalling conditions. Get off the backs of these peasants and workers, he told us, all you who live by exploitation; get rid of the system that produces this poverty and misery. Political freedom took new shape then and acquired a new content.

The quintessence of Gandhi's philosophy were Satyagraha, a vow to hold to the truth and Ahimsa, the abjuration of malice and hatred. His weapons were non-violent non-cooperation, passive resistance and civil disobedience the most drastic remedy in the pharmacopoeia of Satyagraha. Out of these ethico-moral principles stepped forth a virile fighter for freedom who used these weapons for political ends and this was Gandhi's prime contribution to the technique of revolution. With Gandhi's emergence, therefore, Indian politics became a strange mixture of nationalism and religion and ethics and mysticism and fanaticism. India's most celebrated intellectual of modern times Rabindranath Tagore expressed his dismay about Gandhi, saying that liberating a country is not the kind of adventure to be approached with the help of a mystical power. He also said that the society that Gandhi wanted to establish in India was primitive and uncivilized, and that the way he exploited India was simply intolerable.

Thus, Tagore emphasized that Gandhi may keep flying high in the Indian sky with his image of a pretentious saint, but that he should keep himself aside from politics. India is one of the world's earliest civilisations and its history can be traced to about 2000 BC. Indian philosophy, culture, art and other civilisational achievements have been eloquently applauded by Indologists all over the world since time immemorial. It is extraordinary that



Gandhi's cronies could elevate him to such a position that India was Gandhi and Gandhi was India, that he could become the 'father of the nation'. Gandhi's contributions to India's thousand-year-old rich heritage were practically nothing; to revere him as 'father of the nation' was a bizarre travesty of truth and a hitherto unimaginable expression of a personality cult. This unpardonable sin was perpetrated by his followers in the Indian National Congress. Noted Indian historian of recent times, Ramachandra Guha rightly pointed out, 'Mahatma Gandhi was not so much the Father of the Nation as the mother of all debates regarding its future.'

The first opportunity to experiment with this unique technique as a weapon of mass action was provided by the Khilafat agitation. Khilafat was basically part of the romantic Pan-Islamic movement born of religious fanaticism, but it also involved a crosscurrent of rivalries-political, economic and strategic-between the Turks, the Arabs and the Allied powers. In fact, the Khilafat was a moribund institution in which even the Turks had little interest. The Indian Muslims, obviously ignorant of the fact that the Pan-Islamic movement was politically motivated, were moved by the religious fanaticism and angrily protested against the dismemberment of Turkey and the consequent destruction of the Khilafat-the traditional symbol of Islamic unity. But in spite of the fact that the Sultan of Turkey's claim as the supreme religious authority of the Islamic world had little practical significance outside the Ottoman Empire and that the Pan-Islamic movement based on the extraterritorial allegiance of the Indian Muslims cut at the very root of nascent Indian nationalism, Gandhi sought to create out of this movement a united front against the British. Under his leadership the Congress also lent its power, prestige and organization to the Khilafat and sent a deputation to the Viceroy to impress upon him the consequences if the 'just demands' of the Muslims were not accepted.

But the Viceroy, while expressing his sympathy for the Muslim sentiment, made it clear that the contention that Turkey should be allowed to preserve in full the integrity, sovereignty and the dominions which she possessed before the war could not be recognized by the Allied powers. Turkey could not expect, he

said, any more than any other power which drew the sword in the cause of Germany. Gandhi then decided to launch the Non-Cooperation Movement against the Government. He had become 'convinced' that non-cooperation was the only effective remedy for both avoiding violence and healing the wounds inflicted on the Indian Muslims. He also returned all the decorations awarded to him by the British Government for his war services. He could not wear them, he wrote to the Viceroy, with an easy conscience so long as the Indian Muslims had to labour under the wrong done to their religious sentiment.

The movement, however, took on a mass character when to the original issue of the Khilafat were added other questions of wider national importance. According to Pattabhi Sitaramaya, the Triveni (or the confluence of the three streams of the river) of the Khilafat, the Punjab wrongs and the invisible flow of inadequate reforms became full to the brim and by their confluence enriched both in volume and content the stream of non-cooperation. At a special session of the Congress held in Calcutta on 5 September 1920, Gandhi moved a resolution expressing the opinion that there could be no contentment in India without redress of the wrong done to the Indian Muslims and the Punjab and that the only effectual means to vindicate national honour and to prevent repetition of similar wrongs in future was the establishment of Swaraj. The resolution then declared that there was no course left open for the Indian people but to adopt the policy of non-violent non-cooperation until the said wrongs were righted and Swaraj established.

As to the programme of the movement, the resolution advised: (a) surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies, (b) refusal to attend Government functions, (c) gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided and controlled by Government and the establishment of national schools and colleges in the country, (d) a gradual boycott of British courts by lawyers and litigants and the establishment of arbitration courts for the settlement of private disputes, (e) refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia, (f) withdrawal by candidates from the candidature



for election to the Reforms Councils and refusal on the part of the voters to vote for any candidate who may, despite the advice of Congress, offer himself for election, (g) boycott of foreign goods. The concluding part of the resolution was of great importance inasmuch as it suggested measures by which the economic ills of the country and hardships of the people were to be removed. It advised the people to adopt Swadeshi in piece goods and their manufacture on a large scale by means of reviving hand spinning and hand weaving throughout the country.

After an animated debate that lasted for three days the resolution was adopted on 9 September 1920 and a demoralized, backward and divided people suddenly straightened their backs and lifted their heads and took part in disciplined, joint action on a countrywide scale. The Calcutta Congress marked not only a turning point in Indian history but also a personal victory for Gandhi; he not only captured the Congress but also became the undisputed leader of India's struggle for freedom. In making common cause with the Khilafat agitation Gandhi was actuated by his intense desire to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity, the absence of which had always been a terrible scourge of Indian political life. Besides, by stressing the non-violent character of the movement he wanted to make the most spectacular political conquest in history through a means hitherto unknown to any conqueror. But in the achievement of these two goals the Non-Cooperation Movement was not a great success. As the Congress Enquiry put it, the country was all agog to witness the final triumph of the power of the soul over physical might. But the gods had willed it otherwise. Gandhi's dream of Hindu-Muslim unity was shattered when the Moplahs, a band of fanatic Muslims settled on the Malabar coast, rose in revolt against the British, but in their fanatical zeal perpetrated bestial savagery upon the Hindus.

According to contemporary reports, massacre, forcible conversion, desecration of temples, foul outrages upon women, pillage, arson and destruction-all the accompaniments of unrestricted barbarism were committed freely until troops could be hurried to restore order. But the final collapse of the Non-Cooperation Movement followed an outbreak of violence in a village named Chauri Chaura in Uttar Pradesh. Gandhi decided

to suspend the movement and the decision was endorsed by the All-India Congress Committee on 25 February 1921. Although the Non-Cooperation Movement failed to achieve Swaraj within a year as was promised to the people by Gandhi, its most remarkable result was the shift of political emphasis from the elite to the newly awakened masses.

The tremendous enthusiasm that Gandhi was able to evoke among the masses with his slogan of Swaraj and Swadeshi showed the extent of unrest, discontent and anti-British feeling that had been aroused by the conditions of grinding penury created by the war. The crippling financial burdens of the war, the soaring prices of essential commodities and reckless profiteering had created conditions of unprecedented mass misery and impoverishment. To make things worse, an influenza epidemic broke out at the end of the war, which took the unparalleled toll of nearly 14 million people. But despite such poverty and suffering, the post-war years witnessed an unprecedented awakening of the masses of the population to a new purpose of life.

This spirit of awakening did not die out with the collapse of the Non-Cooperation Movement. On the contrary, the spirit of revolt and defiance generated by the movement continued unabated and the feeling of fear, apprehension and frustration completely disappeared. On the economic front this all-pervading atmosphere of defiance and restlessness stimulated labour and peasant movements all over the country. But as a background to this new ferment among the workers and peasants, some attention should first be given to the general economic condition of the people during and after the war. During the first two years following the outbreak of the war, India benefited from generally good harvests but the next two years recorded crop failures almost all over the country, resulting in widespread famine. To meet the situation the Government regulated the export of food grains and introduced a rigid system of internal control.

But these measures could not alleviate the distress of the rural population, most of whom were landless labourers. The growth of the population of these landless labourers from decade to decade resulted in agrarian unrest which expressed itself in such social maladies as petty thefts, rioting and looting. The pitiable condition



of the people was revealed in a report of the Directorate of Public Health in Bengal, which said that the diet of the peasantry was such that even rats could not live on it for more than five weeks. But, as Nehru observed, while the problem of the peasantry was the supreme problem of India, it was ignored by political leaders and Government alike. According to Nehru, the unending talk of constitutional reform and Indianization of services was a mockery and an insult when the manhood of India was being crushed and the inexorable and continuous process of exploitation was deepening the nation's poverty and sapping its vitality. India had become a derelict nation.

The condition of the industrial proletariat was no better. Although during the war, Indian industries, particularly the jute mills in Bengal and cotton mills in Ahmedabad, produced enormous dividends-100 to 200 per cent-the workers who had created these dividends lived at an incredibly low level of existence. The war had strikingly exposed India's industrial backwardness and made the Government realize that industrialization was important not only from the economic point of view but also for political and military considerations. From the political point of view, it was essential for the Government to secure the cooperation of the Indian bourgeoisie and for this purpose it was necessary to make certain concessions to them in the economic field. From the military point of view it was also realized that without some sort of industrial base in India there would always be the danger of exclusive dependence for vital military needs on long-distance overseas supplies. These compelling reasons led the Government to proclaim a new policy of industrialization in India. Soon after the announcement of this policy a crash followed, resulting in a feverish boom and all round acceleration of industrial activity throughout the country.

The number of organized factories increased from 2936 in 1914 to 3436 in 1918. An industrial census taken in 1921 showed that the number of workers in organized factories employing 20 or more workers increased from 2.1 million in 1911 to 2.6 million in 1921. Moreover, encouraged by the Government's liberal policy, British capital began to flow in and colossal profits were made by almost all industrial establishments in the country. The phenomenal

extent of the profits made by Indian industries can be realized from the fact that during the war, while the average earnings of industries in the UK and the USA were 10.5 per cent and 10.6 per cent respectively, in India the average was as high as 17.1 per cent. A delegation of the Dundee Jute Trade Union to India reported in 1925 that in the jute industry the total profit to the shareholders during 1915-24 amounted to £300 million, that is, 90 per cent per annum of the capital, whereas the average wage of the workers in the industry was only £12 per annum. According to another survey, the average dividend paid by the jute mills was more than 140 per cent-the highest being 420 per cent. A leading jute mill, which paid a 250 per cent dividend in 1918, paid 420 per cent in 1919.

31 In the cotton industry, the Tariff Board Enquiry Committee reported that in 1920, 35 companies comprising 42 mills declared dividends of 40 per cent and over, of which 10 companies comprising 14 mills paid 100 per cent and two mills paid over 200 per cent. According to Wadia and Merchant, the average dividend paid by the cotton mills in 1920 was 120 per cent, the highest figure being 365 per cent. In some mills the share-holders were not satisfied with 400 per cent dividends and demanded 500 per cent. Against the background of such fantastic profitmaking by industrial enterprises, the condition of the common people presented a wretched spectacle. According to the official Simon Commission, the average per capita income of the Indians during the post-war years was only £8 per annum. This, however, was only the average gross income, not the actual income of the teeming millions because, as pointed out by Indian economists K.T. Shah and K.J. Khambata, 1 per cent of the population got one-third of the national income while 60 per cent of the population received only 30 per cent of that income. In fact, the average Indian income was just enough either to feed two out of three members of the population or to give them all two instead of three meals a day provided they all consented to go naked, live out of doors all the year round, had no recreation and wanted nothing else but food-the lowest, the coarsest and the least nutritious.

Dissatisfaction with these sub-human conditions of life had already produced ferment among the agricultural and industrial



proletariat and with the outbreak of the war came a wave of peasant and labour movements in various parts of the country. In the industrial field the unrest assumed such serious proportions that very few industrial enterprises were left unaffected by labour disputes or strikes. But these movements had an entirely different character from those taking place before the war. Until the war, these movements had been locally inspired and organized and were completely devoid of any ideology or leadership. For this reason, as B. Shiva Rao pointed out, they aroused no great interest among the political leaders who looked upon industrial disputes with almost complete unconcern.

Speaking about the growing consciousness of the industrial proletariat Nehru also observed that no strike could succeed in those days because the workers were unorganized and helpless. Moreover, there were millions of unemployed who could easily be drawn upon by the employers. Before the war, the numbers of the industrial proletariat were not sufficient to affect the Indian political scene. But after the war, the voice of Indian labour began to be heard. It might have been ignored, Nehru pointed out, but for the fact that the Russian Revolution had forced the working people to attach some importance to the industrial proletariat.

The official Whitley Commission expressed a similar opinion when it stated that prior to the war a strike was a rare occurrence in India because the vast majority of workers not only lacked leadership and organization but were also imbued with a passive outlook on life. It was the war that brought about a radical change in the attitude of the industrial proletariat. They began to realize the potentialities of strike action and this was assisted by the emergence of trade union organizers and by the education which the war had given to the masses. Apart from dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of life, there were other factors that also served to bring about a new outlook, a new consciousness and militancy among the Indian peasants and workers. In the first place, as already noted, Indian soldiers returning home from the war brought with them new ideas and convictions that completely dispelled their sense of inferiority and passivity.

As these soldiers were drawn mostly from the ranks of the peasantry, their experience had a profound effect upon all villagers.

The war almost completely destroyed the notion that the superiority of the white men was unquestionable. This was indeed a thrilling experience for the docile workers and peasants who used to bear all kinds of insult without protest. It was also the most significant change brought about by the war. In the second place, when Gandhi appeared on the Indian political scene and launched the Non-Cooperation Movement, the country was overtaken by a tremendous awakening of the masses and the voices of workers and peasants began to be heard for the first time in India's struggle for freedom. Many philanthropists, intellectuals and political leaders also began to take an interest in the problems of workers and peasants. Indeed, it was at this time that India witnessed the inauguration of the organized and ideologically-inspired labour and peasant movements.

The significance of this new development was that it created that intellectual and emotional atmosphere of fearlessness, defiance and revolt which became an indirect factor in the origin of Left-wing movements in India. The workers and peasants were drawn to the mainstream of political movement by Gandhi's slogan for Swaraj and Swadeshi. But to sustain the spirit of mass support it was necessary for the Congress to come up with a concrete programme vindicating the grievances of the workers and peasants. With this end in view, the Congress, at its Nagpur session in 1920, adopted resolutions soliciting the participation of workers, peasants and students in the national movement. The resolution on labour upheld the cause of the workers, expressed support for their trade union activities and denounced the policy of exploitation and persecution of the workers. The resolution on peasants welcomed the Kisan's (or peasant's) struggle against exploitation and expressed satisfaction at their role in the boycott movement.

But although the Congress expressed sympathy and support for the demands of the workers and peasants, it was less enthusiastic about identifying their class interests with its own. As pointed out by Narendra Dev, the Congress sought the cooperation of the Kisans (or the peasants) in its own struggle but it was unwilling to fight for their economic demands. According to Michael Edwardes, the Congress was opposed to any reform in tenants' rights because much of its financial support came from



large landed proprietors. Similarly, the Congress's attitude to industrial reform also showed that its members were no friends of the workers. In the third place, the ideals of the British labour movement had a profound influence upon intellectual and political leaders such as Lala Lajpat Rai, N.M. Joshi, Bakhale and others who championed the cause of the workers and peasants in India. They were impressed by the principles of the British Labour Party and began to educate the people on Labour Party lines and formulate measures which would secure real freedom for them. Lala Lajpat Rai said, 'India will not be a party to any scheme, which shall add to the powers of the Capitalists and the landlord and will introduce and accentuate the evils of the expiring industrial civilization into our beloved country.'

In this connection it may be noted that the British and Indian working classes were unconscious allies in at least one respect-both were struggling against privileges and exploitation. As long as loyal and quiescent India remained a source of wealth and as long as enough surplus capital was available in Britain for export to the colonial countries, the British working people accepted the Empire as a symbol of national glory. But after the war when the Empire lost its glamour, and colonies were looked upon as a brake upon their own progress, a section of the British working class became indifferent to the Empire's mystique and sympathized with the Indian labour movement, disguising their self interest under the cloak of democratic slogans.

As rightly pointed out by Michael Edwardes, the British working class, which had acquired some political importance after the extension of the franchise and formed a powerful anti-colonial lobby, now began to ask why there should be poverty and unemployment in Britain when millions were being spent in the administration of far away colonies. The more radical elements of the British labour movement thought that the Empire had a class connotation-a symbol of privilege, discrimination and exploitation. They found in Britain's dependence on its colonial possessions a convenient stick with which to beat successive Tory governments. But although they argued that Britain would be better off without the colonies, they did not advocate outright surrender of power.

They wanted gradual transformation of the colonies into self-governing dominions. But even then, their logic provided a timely stimulus to the labour movement in India. Another factor that contributed to the mass awakening in India was the enlargement of people's conception of democracy brought about by a changed outlook towards social ideas and institutions characterized by divisions of race, religion, caste and language. At one end of the social scale were the servile industrial and agricultural proletariat and at the other end stood the frustrated middle class and the intelligentsia, many of whom were anxious to associate themselves with the administration of the country and ordering its affairs. Moreover, as M.R. Masani put it, 'The Indian Maharaja, the big feudal landlord and the rising industrialist and bureaucrat stood like mountain peaks above the plain of poverty.'

The condition of the peasantry and the industrial workers was marked by poverty, illiteracy and degradation of all kinds. But between these two classes there were further inequalities, so that a peasant would look upon the urban population, including the industrial workers, as a privileged class. This was largely on account of the fact that while the peasantry used to contribute the lion's share to the state coffers, Government expenditure would seldom go beyond the urban areas. This economic disparity between the urban and rural population provoked Gandhi to comment that the people in the towns and cities had been riding, like the Old Man of the Sea, on the back of the rural Sinbad and they would do everything but get off his back.

Apart from poverty, the rural population had a burdensome heritage in the caste system, the essential elements of which were endogamy, a hierarchy from top to bottom headed by the Brahmin, rigid restrictions on every sphere of social life, occupational discrimination and even inequality before the law. But after the war and under the forces of industrialism, the people began to question the very raison d' être of these social institutions. The condition of the déclassé middle classes, who received some measure of English education and joined the army of unemployed malcontents, was perhaps worse. As Nehru rightly pointed out, they were frustrated and had nowhere to turn. Neither the old nor the new could offer them any hope. There was no adjustment



to social purpose, no satisfaction in doing something worthwhile, even though suffering came in the train. Custom ridden, they were born old, yet they were without the old culture.

Modern thought attracted them, but they lacked its inner content, the modern social and scientific consciousness. Unable to find their rightful place in society, these frustrated elements turned not only against the alien rulers but also against the well-to-do upper-class social elites who monopolized the country's leadership and dominated the Congress. Their discontent was therefore against both the British imperialists and the bourgeois leaders whom they considered as nothing but lackeys of British imperialism. Thus, feeling themselves betrayed by the moderate policy of the bourgeois leadership, they were drawn to the cult of revolutionary violence. And it was from these discontented elements that a new type of movement emerged, more militant and defiant and representing the broad spectrum of the lower middle classes, workers and peasants as well as students and unemployed youth.

The upper class, the social and political ideas of which provided dynamism to the freedom movement before the advent of Gandhi, was composed of the noblesse de la robe, professional prodigies, landed aristocracy, captains of industry, leaders of thought and intellectuals who drank deep of British liberalism. Many members of this class had been honoured by the Government with offices, titles and dignities as it became scared by the growing extremism of middle-class leaders who had little faith in the efficacy of constitutional agitation against British rule in India.

But the upper-class intellectuals were imbued with the ideas of English nineteenth-century liberalism-freedom of the individual, parliamentary democracy, evolutionary change of society, moral suasion as an instrument of political action and constitutionalism. Their concept of democracy was that of an aristocracy of intellect and wealth. This attitude was well expressed by Sir Ramesh Chandra Mitra in an address to the Congress in 1896: The educated community represented the brain and conscience of the country and were the legitimate spokesmen of the illiterate masses, the natural custodian of their interests. To hold otherwise would be to presuppose that a foreign administration in the service knows

more about the wants of the masses than their educated countrymen. It is true in all ages that those who think must govern those who toil, and could it be that the natural order of things was reversed in this country?

But although these upper-class leaders were fervently patriotic and anxious for the political emancipation and socio-economic advancement of India, they suffered from a number of difficulties which rendered them incapable of identifying themselves with the masses. They were so deeply influenced by the aristocratic liberalism of Burke that they found it difficult to adjust themselves to the doctrine of mass action which Gandhi advocated and the poor man's paradise which he wished to see established in India. They were no doubt anxious to see the conditions of the workers and peasants improved, but they could not reconcile themselves to the idea of political rights for the oppressed classes. They were, in fact, isolated from the rest of the community-strangers in their own land. Essentially urban, they were indifferent to the problems of the rural community. Cut off from the masses whom they claimed to represent, they lived in a world of their own. In short, they were aliens in India, strangers to their own people, and their beliefs and ideas were shared only by a small class of educated people. It is, therefore, no wonder that the ideas of these upper-class leaders did not reach the hearts of the discontented lower-middle-class literates whose condition was becoming increasingly desperate in the absence of any avenue of fulfilment for them and who had little patience with the comfortable doctrines of gradual advance propagated by the moderate leaders of the Congress.

Unable to find their role in the national movement, they found satisfaction either in individualistic anarchist terrorism or in exalted doctrines of revolutionary idealism. Of great significance in the eyes of the intellectuals of this class but of little influence on the illiterate and politically inarticulate masses was the October Revolution in Russia. The downfall of Czarism in Russia, in the words of M.N. Roy, had electrified the democratic and liberal world and galvanized the waning faith in the possibility of capturing power through armed insurrection organized and led by a determined minority. To a section of the Indian intelligentsia, the Russian Revolution, with its dogma of proletarian



internationalism, liberation of all dependent peoples, racial equality and self-determination of all nationalities, heralded the triumph of liberty over despotism, oppression and exploitation. To them, Lenin's declaration that the revolutionary movement of the people of the East could develop effectively only in direct association with the revolutionary struggle of the Soviet Republic against international imperialism was an explosive statement and all the nations of Asia, struggling for liberation heard it with a new hope.

But despite the romantic appeal of the Russian Revolution, most of those who were attracted by it in India had no clear conception of the forces that had provided momentum to the Russian revolutionary movement, the ideals and ideologies that stimulated it, the price that had to be paid for the fulfilment of those ideals and above all, its relevance to the Indian situation. In fact, it was only after the overthrow of the Czarist regime that Russia began to interest Indian nationalists and Marxist literature was finding its way to the bookshelves of the educated few.

Besides, news about the Soviet Union was so exiguous, distorted or full of legends that it was almost impossible for the Indian people to examine and appreciate the revolution in its true perspective. The initial reaction of the Indian press, marked more by caution than by optimism, clearly indicated that the voice of those who thought that the Russian Revolution had ushered in a new era of hope for mankind was indeed feeble. But there is no doubt that the overthrow of Czarist tyranny in Russia raised the amour propre of the Indian people, smarting under repressive British rule. As a result, as the political, economic and social ideas of the revolution were beginning to be better understood by Indian intellectuals, their conviction in radical ideas also began to gain strength and a new voice, strident and zealous, was added to India's cry for freedom. More important still, the ideological monopoly so far exercised by the worshippers of conservative liberalism was broken and a rival ideology emerged instilling new socio-economic forces into the content of Indian nationalism. And it was from among the followers of this new ideological current that the Leftist movement in India was born.

# 5

# BAL GANGADHAR TILAK

Lokmanya Bal alias Balwant Gangadhar Tilak was born on July 23, 1856 at Ratnagiri (Maharashtra). His father Gangadharshastri Tilak, was highly proficient in Sanskrit and Mathematics. He had his initial education in Ratnagiri but as his father was promoted to the post of Assistant Deputy Educational Inspector at Pune, young Bal came to Pune with his family in 1865. Like his father, he was also very well grounded in Sanskrit and Mathematics. He passed the Matriculation Examination in 1872 and joined the Deccan College for higher studies in 1873. He was a resident student in the college.

Two professors had made a mark on Tilak's mind during his college career. They were principal William Wordsworth (the grandson of the well-known poet William Wordsworth) and Professor Kero Laxman Chhatre. Tilak's command over Mathematics and Sanskrit became known to all in the Deccan College. His striking originality and compendious method were noted with pride by Prof. Chhatre and his other colleagues. Tilak studied for one term at Elphinston College, Mumbai in 1875 but he did not feel comfortable in the Mumbai college and returned to Pune for the second term. As a young student of the scholastic career, he was patriotic to the core. He passed his first B.A. in 1875, another one in 1876 in first class and turned his attention to Law for two years. After securing first division in B.A., Tilak joined the Law College for the professional degree.

Tilak came in contact with another young student Gopal Ganesh Agarkar during his stay in the Deccan College. Agarkar was doing his M.A. and was interested in the subjects moral



philosophy and logic. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar was progressive in his views on religion and fought fearlessly against the conservatism. He waged a relentless war against the age-old customs like the sati, the child-marriages, etc. and the social system like the caste system. The Hindu widows were the pitiable lot these days. Agarkar had strong views on the subject and felt that the country would go ahead only after eliminating the evil customs and beliefs from the Hindu society. The works of Spencer and Mill had tremendously influenced him. He felt very strongly about the degeneration caused by religious orthodoxy expressing itself in social institutions like the caste system, child-marriage and the almost barbarous treatment meted out to Hindu widows under the name of religion. He was of the opinion that the regeneration of the country could only come about by removing these evils from the Hindu society. Tilak, though agreed with Agarkar in this matter, felt very keenly the bondage into which his country had fallen and the poignant shame of it made him think of foreign means for the political emancipation of his enslaved countrymen. Tilak firmly believed that all social evils could be mended if the country attained political freedom. Moreover, he held the view that social reforms can be brought about by the initiative of the Hindus themselves. Intervention by the British in the cause of social reform would increasingly divide the people only to the benefit of the colonial administration.

Vishnushastri Chiplunkar was an eminent scholar and one of the recognised leaders of the intellectual world in Pune. He vehemently criticised the role of Christian missionaries and the social reformers. He often defended the history and civilization of Hindus and awaken to rouse the people. He pleaded that only because of ill-luck, the Hindus were reduced to slavery.

Mahadeo Govind Ranade, was a mighty intellect, a man of great wisdom broad mind, prodigious industry and vast learning, an eminent economist and historian, and one of India's greatest thinkers of his day. He aimed at reorganising Hindu society on the basis of justice and reason, which implied a freedom from race, creed, and prejudices. He was for social reform in Hindu society. Both Ranade and Chiplunkar were instructors and inspirers of the two schools of thought they founded. In this battle Tilak

sided with Chiplunkar whereas Agarkar with Ranade. However, about education, they held similar views. Agarkar and Tilak began to think out ways and means of establishing private schools on the model of missionary institutions. Ranade said that the country would not be emancipated unless it had, like America, its national press, national education and national church. When Agarkar and Tilak approached Chiplunkar, he welcomed the idea and agreed. Chiplunkar resigned from the job of a teacher in a government school at Chiplun and opened a school in Pune in January, 1880. This school, the New English School, was going to make history in the cultural and political life of Pune. Tilak joined on the first day as promised. Agarkar after his M.A. examination joined the school in January 1881. The New English School prospered and brought fame to the founders, who were the men of undying faith determined to carry out their mission at all cost. Even the British officers admired the progress made by the school.

At about the same time, the colleagues discussed the possibility of launching two weeklies _ one in Marathi and the other in English _ to educate the people on public affairs. Chiplunkar was very keen on this project. He had already purchased on instalments the press of Namjoshi, who was conducting the `Deccan Star', his own paper. Now it was decided to name the Marathi weekly the `Kesari' _ the Lion, and the English weekly the `Mahratta', for a Mahratta has been known as an indefatigable fighter for the honour of his country. The declared objectives of the weeklies were to give a fearless account of the existing condition of the country, to give reviews of Indian books and to give correct estimates of political affairs in Britain.

To begin with, the `Kesari' was a co-operative concern and Chiplunkar, Agarkar and Tilak used to write in it. Agarkar was the first editor of `Kesari' while Tilak was that of `Mahratta'.

The Kesari always had a soft corner for the rulers of Indian states and wanted to support them whenever possible. However, both Agarkar and Tilak, the young editors were found guilty in the case of Kolhapur princely state and were sentenced to four month's imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1000. They were sent to Dongri Jail in 1882. Both of them received a hero's welcome when they were released from the jail. This imprisonment brought added



luster to the New English School and to the Kesari and they continued to prosper.

In 1882, when the Education Commission, under the Chairmanship of Sir William Hunter visited the then Bombay Presidency, the workers of the New English School made such an impression on the commission and the prominent men of the Bombay University that they encouraged them to start a college to impart higher education to Indians. As a result, in 1885, the Ferguson college was started. Tilak taught Sanskrit and Mathematics with great ability in this college.

### BEGINNING OF CONFLICT

The Kesari in its first issue clearly explained the objective of imparting political education to the people. It said, "Just as street lights and the rounds of police constables bring to light anything wrong or unjust happening on the roads in the dark, the editorial pen brings to light the injustices and the wrongs of the administration. In England, the doings of all, right from the Queen Empress down to the lowest servant of the crown, are brought before the eyes of the public through the columns of news papers, and thus no act of injustice goes unnoticed.

It is our intention to write impartially about the way in which officials of Government perform their duty. Thus, the Kesari undertakes to keep a vigilant eye on the administration and give it praise or blame when due, without favour or fear.

However, in the editorial board of the Kesari, there started an ideological conflict on the question of precedence of social reform. Agarkar wanted social reform even by government legislation. Tilak wanted political freedom first and opposed government's intervention in socio-religious institutions. He insisted that social reforms should come from within by the education of public opinion and should not be foisted upon the people by any act of coercion. It may be mentioned that principal Wordsworth and even Mr. Justice Telang held the same view.

These differences on public matters affected the harmony in Kesari as well as in the New English School. There were also differences about the emoluments to be received by the life

members of the society for work done by them outside the school and college. Tilak wanted complete dedication and selfless work like that of missionaries. But Agarkar, Apte and Gopal Krishna Gokhale opposed it.

As a result Agarkar left Kesari in 1887 to start the new newspapers, Sudharak (the Reformer) a paper of his own and the Kesari was left to Tilak alone. Because of increasing differences Tilak left Deccan Education Society in 1890. While resigning he said, ` In leaving the school today I seem to have forsaken the goal of my life".

**WIDER HORIZON**

Tilak was now more and more attracted to public activities. Basically he was a born rebel and wore the rebel robe to the end of his life. He now entered into a wider field. He came forward as a public figure and a vigorous independent agitator who rebelled against all wrongs, and his boundless devotion to whatever cause he championed was witnessed by an admiring public.

He must have felt very poignantly for having lost the occupation of his choice when he left the New English School. Forsaken by his colleagues Tilak must have spent sleepless nights in thinking of his future. But the courageous Tilak decided to convert this liberation from the narrow field into a blessing for the advancement of his country.

Now the Kesari _ the lion _ began to roar in the cause of people against the tormenting bureaucracy, the missionaries and the social reformers.

His first task was to reach the people because he knew that lasting change, that a rebirth of values, required change in the hearts of people and not, as the reformers believed, change in the forms of institutions. As an editor who had always dedicated himself to popular education he first reached the people. N.C. Kelkar, his chief colleague observed, "Through his paper, the `Kesari', he exercised an immense influence over the masses, and it is this influence that is mainly responsible for the infusion of a new spirit among the people and the same influence was responsible for his two sedition cases and the subsequent imprisonments."



He was a sincere, forceful speaker, and he taught from both the class-room and the public platform his new message of awakening India.

**ESTABLISHMENT OF CONGRESS**

The Indian National Congress was established in 1885. Tilak welcomed it. He foresaw for the Congress a great future and visualised it as the future parliament of the country.

As an editor, Tilak was unsurpassed. The Kesari and the Mahratta under his guidance were always tremendously influential and came to be financially successful. His sincerity and unflinching sense of dedication led him to champion the causes of his people against any and all who would be unjust, autocratic or opportunistic. As editor of the Kesari, Tilak became the awakener of India.

The Lion of Maharashtra, the most influential Indian newspaper editor of his day.

**TILAK'S PHILOSOPHY FOR THE NATION**

Lord Macaulay's Indian intellectuals, the leaders of Westernisation in social and political reform, based their programme of social and political action almost entirely on the philosophy of life and action of nineteenth century Europe. They were truly more the products of Western civilization than Indian. Tilak was not satisfied with the Western values and was not ready to reject India's own philosophy of life in order to imitate the philosophy of the British.

For Tilak, there was no reason for India to feel ashamed of her civilization when compared to the west. Just the contrary, India should feel great pride. Indian values were different from but not inferior to western values.

Dharma, according to Tilak was the integrative principal, and Swadharma the spiritual and social duty of each individual. Here was the guide to social and political action.

The Westernized intellectuals (mainly social reformers) wanted to change and remake India in an alien faith. But they were wrong. Tilak reminded them, "How can a man be proud of the

greatness of his own nation if he feels no pride of his own religion?" It was the Bharadharma that provided an understanding of the moral purposefulness of the universe, which is the necessary basis of a philosophy of life. It provided Tilak and the nationalists like Ghose, Pal, and Lal with a guide to concrete action in personal, social and political matters.

From an Indian philosophy of life Tilak and the nationalist leaders began to construct an Indian philosophy of politics that was to become the political theory of the Indian Independence Movement. He became the chief architect of the political philosophy of the Indian independence movement as he was one of the most important leaders of India at that time.

**Two Festivals**

Perhaps the most effective way in which he reached the people was through the employment of national festivals. He was instrumental in popularizing two great festivals, one to Ganapati, the Hindu deity of learning and propitiousness, and a festival to revive the memory of glory of Shivaji, the liberator of Maharashtra, and the restorer of Swaraj through his battle with the Mughal Empire.

He especially emphasised the dynamic spirit of Shivaji. He believed it was the spirit which actuated Shivaji in his doings that is held forth as the proper idea to be kept constantly in view of the rising generation. To keep this spirit constant, Tilak worked ceaselessly to reach the people and to educate them through the festivals. He carried his doctrine throughout Maharashtra and waged his battle. Education through religion and history, through the association in the popular mind with gods and heroes, through recreating an appreciation of the heritage of the past as a guide to the future. This was the way he educated the people.

**First Sedition Case (1897)**

Tilak was aggressive and writing very strongly through the editorials of Kesari against the British bureaucracy.

The British bureaucracy and the Anglo-Indian press realised that Tilak was an emerging leader of the people and of a new spirit in India. Those who lacked foresight began to fear him.



In the tense atmosphere of famine and a plague _racked Pune, a young man, Damodar Chaphekar assassinated Rand. Rand was the British official in charge of the plague. Those who feared Rand, were quick to blame Tilak for the death, and hinted at his complicity in a conspiracy for political assassination. Tilak was, of course, innocent of any knowledge of or collaboration in this crime. He had publically disagreed with Rand for his unsympathetic behaviour towards the plague stricken people. Tilak had condemned the inhuman aspects of the British anti-plague campaign, but he had never contemplated or encouraged the assassination of the British official in charge. Tilak, nevertheless, was brought to trial in 1897, not as an accessory to assassination, not as being involved in the plot to commit murder, but rather on the charge of `sedition'. The court allowed the prosecution to argue that he had written seditious matter and his criminal sedition constituted, in effect, `dissatisfaction' with the British Raj. It was brought to the notice of the court that Tilak was not positively ``affectionate for'' British officialdom. This was one of the most unusual interpretations of `sedition and disaffection' in the annals of British justice. Nevertheless Tilak was convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. The British had miscalculated both the effect of this sentence on Tilak and on public opinion.

N.C. Kelkar observes, "His arrest and prosecution in 1897 was a sensation that nearly pulled the mind of the country by its roots, as political prosecutions were then extremely rare, and Tilak was, in himself a man big enough to mark an epoch by his personal misfortune."

But this was not Tilak's last imprisonment. The British Indian Government endeavoured to convict him of perjury in connection with the well-known Tai Maharaj case in 1904. They did not succeed as he was acquitted by the High Court. In 1908, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment, again for sedition; but in 1916, he was acquitted of a similar charge. For two decades he was persecuted by the British Indian Government because they saw in him the greatest challenge to their rule over the Indian empire.

The seditation case in 1897 roused sympathy not only in Maharashtra but also in Bengal. In Bengal, Shishir Kumar Motilal

Ghosh and Surendranath Bannerjee started raising funds for the defense of Tilak. The court found Tilak guilty but Tilak's prestige rose very high in the minds of the people. Max Mueller and Indian leaders submitted a memorial to the government for the early release of Tilak. The government also soon realised the mistake and released Tilak.

Tilak emerged from prison in 1899 (first sedition) after serving eighteen months of his sentence. Now he became a national hero. He got following outside Maharashtra. He became the first all-India national leader. He had been persecuted for his political opinions. He was now the acknowledged political leader of the nation and the nation was prepared to heed his opinions. He had begun as an awakener of the people and as a critic of bureaucratic abuses. He emerged from prison with the responsibility of leading the Nationalist cause to political self-determination (Swatantrya). He was acclaimed the Lokmanya, the honoured and respected of the people.

Tilak's knowledge and love of the great classical Indian values had prepared him with a personal philosophy and a frame of reference for his battles with social reformism and with the spirit of orthodoxy. It also provided him with the foundation of his emerging political philosophy. He had fought against injustice, he had argued against the placating policies of the moderates. Now he began to put forward a positive political programme centred around the concept of Swaraj, self-rule for India. He realised that the self-rule must precede the meaningful social reform. National self-rule, he believed, was the only enduring basis for national unity and national self-respect. He reminded people that Shivaji had recreated Swaraj as a necessary foundation of social and political freedom, progress and morality. He, therefore, declared, which in course of time became a famous slogan, that "swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it".

## TILAK'S PROGRAMME FOR SWARAJ

He now vigorously took up the propaganda of Swadeshi, Boycott and National education. These were the three programmes for the achievement of Swaraj. The swadeshi movement spread in many states and was met with repression. Theprogramme of national education was a logical outgrowth of the Swadeshi and Boycott movements. The plan involved the establishment of schools throughout the country dedicated to giving young India a truly national education. Boycott moved from the economic into the political sphere. It moved from Bengal to all-India.



### Second Sedition Case (1908)

There were bomb outrages and the government's attitude was becoming increasingly stiff towards them. The repression by the government breed conspiracies and political murders. Against this background Tilak wrote the editorial in Kesari on May 12, 1908 "the misfortune of the country". By this article Tilak was alleged to have brought into hatred and contempt the government established by law and also set one class of people against another. A prosecution was instituted against Tilak under section 124-A and 153-A. He was arrested on May 25, 1908. The case came up for hearing before Justice Davar on July 17, 1908 and a jury of six Europeans and three Parsees was empanelled. On all charges Tilak was found guilty by a verdict of seven to two. He was sentenced for six years imprisonment. When asked just before sentence was passed if he had anything more to say, he spoke the immortal lines:

"All I wish to say is that inspite of the verdict of the Jury I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher powers that rule the destiny of things and it may be the will of the providence that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my suffering than by my remaining free."

He was placed in virtual solitary confinement in a prison cell in faraway Mandalay. In this solitary confinement he wrote his great philosophic treatise on the Gita _ the Gita Rahasya. He lived the life of a true scholar and knowledge seeker, and the Karmyoga of his Gita became the greatest monument to the success of his search.

## HOME RULE

Not only in India but in England also, there was widespread opinion that Tilak's imprisonment was a proof that the Government had resolved by hook or by crook to remove him from their path.

The `Manchester Guardian', `The Times', `New Age' were very critical about the `British justice'. He was released from jail in 1914, the year in which World war I started in Europe. Because of the war, British wanted internal peace in India about which Tilak gave personal assurance but stressed the passive nature of his campaign for Home Rule. Tilak and Mrs. Besant and their co-workers toured all of India. Home Rule Leagues became the effective organizations for the spreading of the new message of politically awakened India. Home Rule was linked to swaraj. Tilak repeatedly said,

> *"I said that it was our `right' to have Home Rule but that is a historical and a European way of putting it; I go further and say that it is our `Dharma'; you can not separate Home Rule from us, as you can not separate the quality of heat from fire; both are inseparably bound up."*

**TILAK AND JINNAH**

During the year Tilak had worked closely with Mohammed Ali Jinnah, one of the prominent young Muslim leaders. As a matter of fact, when the government tried in 1916 again to convict Tilak of preaching seditious doctrines, it was Jinnah who represented him before the court and won his acquittal. Tilak knew that a united India, Hindu and Muslim, could best promote India's cause, and through his efforts the 1916 Lucknow session of the Congress witnessed the development of a common programme with the Muslim League. It is because of Tilak, the organised Muslim community worked with the Congress and demanded equal position to India in the British empire.

**Tilak's England Trip Cancelled (1918)**

The Home Rule League deputation consisting of Tilak, G.S. Khaparde, B.C. Pal, N.C. Kelkar and R.P. Karandikar wanted to go to England to present to the English people India's case for a more honoured place among the nations of the Empire. Tilak and the company, therefore, left Pune in March, 1918, went to Mumbai, Madras and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) to proceed to England. However, their passports were cancelled and in Ceylon, they were telegraphically informed not to proceed to England since England was waging a great war.



**The Chirol Case and Tilak's visit to England**

Sir Valentine Chirol had made defamatory comments in his book, `Indian Unrest', both about Tilak and about the independence movement in India.

To Tilak the most objectionable thing was that Chirol interpreted his actions and writings as a direct or indirect incitement to deeds of violence, and some of his remarks on Tilak's personal character were based on the judgement of Mr. Justice Chandavarkar. Tilak brought a civil suit in London against Sir Valentine Chirol. In fact the suit was nominally against Chirol, in reality it was against bureaucracy. Obviously, Tilak lost the case. The British court feared that Tilak's victory would have amounted to the British withdrawn from India. Tilak lost the case but won many friends for India's cause.

He had to spend £400 every day as fees. The fees for studying the brief amounted to £3,000.

His experience in England had also convinced him of the value of `foreign propaganda', of placing India's just case for self-rule before the people of the world. He hoped to see Indian leaders working not only in London but also in Tokyo, Paris and Rome, and he expressed a desire to go himself to the United States to further the cause of Indian independence.

He also wanted to go to Paris in 1919, to attend the Paris peace settlement for the conclusion of World war I. He wanted, there, to advocate the application of the principle of national self-determination to India. But the British government refused permission.

**ADVENT OF GANDHI**

In the meanwhile Gandhi had returned to India from South Africa and was now preparing the country for a non-violent struggle against the Government of India over the Rowlatt Act. He wished Tilak were a satyagrahi. Tilak wrote from London, "We should fully support Mr. Gandhi". Tilak returned to India on November, 26, 1919.

He passed away in Mumbai on 1st August, 1920 because of malarial fever and pneumonia.

**LEGACY OF LOKMANYA TILAK**

Undoubtedly the nation will ever remain grateful to Tilak for the deathless struggle he launched for the deliverance of his countrymen from political bondage and for the endless sacrifices and sufferings he made in the cause of the motherland. Indeed he was largely the maker of the Congress movement, and it was he who brought about a mass consciousness and changed the course of history.

He taught the people that they need not humbly submit to alien conceptions of either the purpose of life or the right ordering of life. He reminded the nation of its history and its heritage. This pride in history and in classical values allowed a self-reliant India to grow strong and to take action to bring about a better way of life in accordance with India's own vision of life and the world.

Dhananjay Keer, the welknown biographer of eminent leaders, observes, "Tilak was not only the first mass leader of India to rise in revolt in Asia against the British Empire, but also the herald of Asian nationalism who inspired the Asian leaders and nations that were suppressed under the iron heel of western imperialism.

Dr. Sukarno, the Indonesian President, testified to this fact when he said, during the course of a speech at Bombay that he derived inspiration from their freedom struggle from Tilak, Gandhi and Dadabhai Naoroji".

This fact was also testified when the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra and later the Dy. Prime Minister of India, Mr. Yashwantrao Chavan stated in a public speech on 1st August 1961 in Pune that the Chief Minister of East Nigeria had told him that they held Tilak and Gokhale in very high esteem.

Gandhiji, in his paper, `Young India' wrote, " Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak is no more ....... No man of our times had the hold on the masses that Mr. Tilak had. The devotion that he commanded from thousands of his countrymen was extraordinary. He was unquestionably the idol of his people. His word was law among thousands. A giant among men has fallen. The voice of the lion is hushed".

Jinnah called him a selfless patriot and a unique figure. Maulana Hazrat Mohani said that Tilak was greater than and superior to every other leader in every respect. The Indian and the foreign newspapers were appreciative of Tilak's unique contribution for the growth of Indian nationalism.



V.G. Bhat, who accompanied Tilak in his London tour says,

> *"Sons and daughters of India ! May the example of the Lokmanya inspire you to undertake work entailing service and sacrifice for the uplift of your countrymen and establishing the brotherhood of man all over the world. Do as much as you can unegoistically for these noble causes, in the fullest faith that such selfless work will lead you to God".*

# 6

# Tilak and Freedom Movement

### THE PERSONALITY AND LIFE

The personality and life-philosophy of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak had a profound effect on his society.He had contributed to almost all important fields like politics, social reforms, philosophy and education. The objectives of education were not very clear to many people. For Tilak, learning was not just acquisition of knowledge useful in preparing for native clerical jobs. The creation of educated men through the learning process was certainly beneficial to the alien rulers for running their administrative machinery. People so turned out, welcomed the golden fetters, by entering in to Government jobs. To break through this British black magic was the first and foremost need of the hour. The venerable Vishnushastri Chiplunkar was one such social leader, who had crushed these fetters of Governmental service, and, started the monthly publication of his `Nibandhamala' (`Series of Essays') through which he used to impart real instruction to the people on their `Mother Land, Language and Religion'. Through his writings he used to expound forcefully the significance of the loss of `freedom' and of Self-Government.

All this happened when the British rule was, of half a century old. People, as well as, their leaders had come to look upon the British rule as a Divine Gift and British as their respected preceptors and such ideas had become firmly rooted in their thinking. They had got excited and captivated by the wholesome results of the British Rule. Slowly however, the wicked intentions of the rulers were getting clear, and with it, dawned the realisation, that loss



of freedom stood for, not mere loss of political power, but for total destruction of the indigenous culture, religion and language. The enlightenment of the true difference between slavery and independence, and consequential awareness of the responsibility to awaken the masses to this reality, were at work in the founding of an independent school by leaders like Chiplunkar, Tilak and others.

Tilak and other leaders established the New English School (1880), The Fergusson College (1884) and The Deccan Education Society (1885). The curriculum, the teaching methods and the examination system, were the same old ones, but with the difference of having the Management, the teachers, the atmosphere, all being Indian. Tilak was one of the founder members of this Institution and was also on its teaching faculty. But in the course of time he came to realise that he could not be totally at one with its policies and practices; and, when his differences mounted high, he dissociated himself from the D.E. Society. Lying open before him then was a vast field of social service at school, college or university levels and at the levels beyond, all totally untitled and demanding the services of an efficient ploughman. What was being carried earlier through `Nibandhamala' by Vishushastri Chiplunkar, was undertaken by Tilak with great vigour and tenacity and on a comprehensive scale. Of these duties he was quite clear and cognizant in mind, right from the moment of his founding the school. Almost simultaneously and within one year after the establishment of the school, that is in 1881, the weeklies Kesari (in Marathi) and Mahratta (in English) were started. In 1889 Tilak devoted himself wholly to the responsibilities of the Kesari, and thus commenced his life of rigour as a Nation-educator. Tilak became a national-teacher.

What is the content of National Education? During the days of bondage, the first and foremost aim of education, is to arouse among the masses an urge for freedom and to prepare them for a fight for freedom; to arouse the complacent masses with an awareness of their dormant potential and to employ that in the fight for freedom. This was the objective that motivated Tilak and in what was reflected allegorically in the motto chosen by Tilak for the Kesari.

What is it that constitutes National education? It covers everything that records the country's glorious past in the fields of religion, culture and literature, also an examination of its present-day-ills, and, above all, an anxious thought to the ways and means of fighting of their root-cause viz. the foreign rule-the syllabi of national education comprise thoughts to the indigenous, the foreigners, the Nation, the independence, means of winning independence, as to who can be the rightful claimants of self-rule, the nation's strength, and spots of strength and weakness of the foreign-rule. The study material thus includes all the above, plus the up-to-date information on the ever-moving current of affairs in various fields. National education involves correct decisions amidst ever-fluctuating situations and exact guidance to people of different dispositions, rising united with a lion's strength. What Tilak did was the awakening of such a lion of the populace who was burning with the fire of Inward-Strength. His roaring proclamation as-"Self-Rule is my birth-right and I shall not fail to achieve it"-started reverberating through the caves and dens of the minds of the Indian people. Never must have, allegorical verse-lines been put to such effective use among the masses.

Successing this mission demanded a varied combination of tremendous intelligence, unswerving faith, utter fearlessness, steady mind, selflessness, firmness, high courage and readiness to go behind the bars. And all this in turn demanded a firm philosophical foundation and practical awareness. It also needs the skill and resourcefulness in a judicious use of strength and tact while leading the masses in fighting with the foreign rulers. For, politics is not a unisided affair, but one which touches and enters all compartments of life, of the society, and, is double-faced through its spontaneous and circumstantial rules. This requires strategy in both speech and writing, facing challenges of all nature and unfailing shooting of the target much like Rama's arrows from the ever full-quivers.

Earlier newspapers and periodicals in Maharashtra had carried the movement of spread of education. Knowledge brings about new awakening and new sharpness, but not necessarily a will to act. This latter part requires a countrywide philosophy and application of intellect. What Lokmanya Tilak did, was putting an end to mere propagation of knowledge and starting an era of actual activity. He transformed the newspapers into viewspapers and verily into missiles. This needs a basis of a different kind of intelligence and mental power from the one, in the field of mere academic education.



Three media of mass-education were current in Tilak's times; educational institutions, religious platforms and news-papers or public lectures. If he wished Tilak could have been quite successful in the first two; he could have been a teacher of high order with his intellectual and scholarly capacities; he could also have been a good teacher imparting religious discourses in the cause of the nation, knowing fully well its effectiveness and power (as he once remarked about his preferences in life). He does not exclude using the temple-institutions in the service of the Nation, and gave a wide social base to the institution on religious discourses. Festivals like ganeshotsav represent only new, extended, religious and national forms of the same. These festivals contributed largely in creating Tilak's image as a National Teacher. A new concept viz. that of `National-Devotee' arose and the old one of a `Religious-Devotee' received social and national dimensions. We thus realise how Tilak's concept of education was extensive enough ranging over the whole of country and combining tradition with modernity. He was ever inventing new and newer media to be put to service in his mission.

This mission of national education and social organisation which he carried with unflinching faith and spiritual strength was the outcome of the life-foundations he secured from the `Bhagwadgita'. One can know the personality and life-philosophy of Tilak best through his marvelous book `Gita-Rahasya'. This was not written just with the help of ancient commentaries, which no doubt he had well gone-through, but in addition, he had studied the Upanishads, the theistic as well as atheistic systems of Indian philosophy, the Great Epicsp Ramayan and Mahabharat and the Puranic literature. Further, through comparative study of the Eastern and Western doctrines, rose his deep conviction that the yoga propounded in the Gita was the `Yoga of self-less Action'. The sub-title he gave to his book was `The Hindu Philosophy of Life, Ethics and Religion', requesting the readers to refer to his

book for answers to questions on correct duty or its reverse. He has dedicated his work not to any dear one, a preceptor or a deity, but to the `Mankind Deified.' `To the Divine Lord united with the Populace' that makes clear how he treated the Society as Divine Manifestation, and how his writing of this book stood for his life-philosophy.

"Your authority extends only as far as doing the duty it is not within your perview to think of fruit thereof; hence, never pin your eyes upon the results of your action; neither insist on not doing the action".

This stanza through its four quarters, which are beautifully complementary to each other, makes a wonderful Quadruplet for the philosophy of `life of Desireless Action'. Tilak's commentary on this stanza is worth constant contemplation. Says he, that after stating that one must stop at doing duty, there is a natural expectancy of one's rightfully enjoying its fruit also. So the next line was needed to the fruit, and also the third line asking not be motivated by the fruit while doing the duty. The last line emphasises one's not abandoning action and asks never to entertain such a thought, for one must do the assigned duty, at all cost. `Duty one must never run away from, neither perform it with attachment,' is thus the gist of the Quadruplet.

This `Desireless Duty' that is taught here is an introduction to the `Soul Steady-in-Reason' referred to in the following stanza-

`When one casts away all the longings of the mind,' and gets contented with one's own state, then one is called as `One of Steadied Intellect'.

Three qualities are essentially needed to attain this state of mind:

(1) Discriminative faculty,

(2) Benigness towards all creatures,

(3) Unification and welfare of society,

The first one is apparent in the judgement of desirable and undesirable nature of actions. For it is a thought upon the pros and cons or the propriety and impropriety of an act that gives rise to the will to act. Those whose discerning faculty is not steady,



go on continually receiving waves of new and newer ideas and thus can not gain concentration on anything. Their thinking is called `arresting thinking' which, to be transformed into discerning thinking, needs a clear knowledge of what is meritorious or otherwise, moral or immoral, selfish or selfless. This requires having eyes ever fixed on universal good and on how to attain it. A person with such an attitude alone can show discrimination in right and wrong actions. The outburst "I am immersed in concerns about the universe coming from Samartha Ramdas can be said to be representing this very mental make-up. In truth, those are sages of high spiritual attainment, who are ever engrossed in the furtherance of welfare of all creatures; but those who translate this spiritual practice in to the life of worldly activities must be looked up on as persons of a superior order. They are actively working for the uplift of the entire society.

The significance of social unification and welfare has been explained at length and with a number of illustrations by Tilak. (Geeta Rahasya-pp-326-334) It does not mean merely assembling people, but linking them with similar ideals and aspirations and with the bonds of affection. This task involves constant thought on and working for their mental nourishment, their physical wellbeing, and ways and means of assuring these. Also it stands for leading to virtuous paths as for averting from going astray- "were I to abandon action, there will be world-wide catastrophe".

So says Lord Krishna, for, the common man imitates the actions of distinguished leaders. So it is the bounden duty of the wise, to set example in conduct to the society. Says Tilak in the same vein; "learned people are the very eyes of the society, and so their shirking from duty will lead to social destruction through mental blindness and imbalance". Further; "the wise constitute the eyes of the society even its preceptors, mending the society when and where needed, so as to suit the changing times and region."

Tilak was engrossed in fixing the nature of his undertaking in arousing the strength of the masses and in reflecting on putting to effective urges suited to local conditions. Through his pen, he acted as a powerful watch-dog to every act on the part of the rulers. He analysed very meticulously and explained the results thereof to the society as well as to the Government. As a teacher

performing this mission to the common man and to the intelligentsia, he was truly a National Teacher.

It was not that Tilak disapproved that the Gita brought about a reconciliation of `Knowledge, Action and Devotion'. What was however important, was to which one of the three, he attached primacy. Concisely, he views the Gita as a religious text expounding `life of action with Basis in Knowledge and Stress on Devotion. Here, the substantive `Life of Action' he qualifies with the word Desireless' or `detached'. Hence his most condensed description of the final teaching of the Gita is-`Desireless Life of Action', which is also the fine thread running vibrantly through his entire life-activity. In its application this principle takes different shapes suiting different regional and temporal contexts, as has been explained at length by Tilak. His editorials deserve to be studied from this angle, highlighting a firm philosophical foundation, perfect awareness of practical situations, width of vision, exact analysis, vision of the consequences, impartiality in treatment and love for righteousness. These qualities of his editorials, answering mainly the contemporary situation, raised them to all-time-relevance and permanent value. Thus Tilak did not give birth to a news-paper named `Kesari', but to a `Missile' in the form of editorials, which was put to effective use, also by those who came after him in the field.

Through these editorials Tilak imparted an education on `what constitutes a nation?', `Duty to Nation', and `How to perform it.' His Gita-Rahasya is not a work expounding sectarian doctrines nor a commentary in the fashion of ancient commentators. Tilak is an expositor of the Gita, expounding deep `Humanitarian Religion', especially enlightening on its practical aspect, beside its familiar spiritual one.

Before Tilak were the above solemn lines `that is Duty which brings about material prosperity as well as spiritual good.' The Gita has praised King Janak as an ideal illustration of this.

"The word `Dharma' is derived from the function of sustaining. Society is sustained through. So that in true Duty, which performs the function of sustaining (the society)." This was Tilak's view of Duty. In his reflections on Duty, we get beautifully combined the remarks from the Gita and from.



From Tilak's discussion it is clearly felt that, if the Gita be called the `Text of Spiritualism', the bhismacharasya words sound its vivid Applications and that both the works proclaim identical principles.

"The crux of duty is concealed in a cave. (Hence) the path followed by distinguished persons is (to be accepted as) Duty". This is the final advice, which stands for discrimination, exact analysis and guidance, as Tilak did after a close study and life-long experience. The range of Tilak's thinking was comprehensive and multifarious. He wanted to turn the train of the entire nation on to proper rails and also to speed it on.

Tilak's views on life and duty rested on the Eternal Law and theistic faith. While propagating, in practical life, the `Desireless Life of Action' he believed in `Final Emancipation' as the ultimate aim of man's action.

Agarkar, on the contrary, was a rationalist out and out, and was not ready to accept anything that went beyond reasoning. He threw asunder the credibility in word. A thorough secularist, he took God as an invention and as an aberration of mind. He was at the same time for liberty of thought. The first and the last tenet of humanitarianism, according to him, was "those who are dedicated to universal religion, the furtherance of welfare of mankind must fearlessly communicate to others, whatever they felt as correct, commendable and salubrious, and practice it as far as possible." He opted for the scientific mode of comparing and classifying observed situations and for ascertaining the rules working behind them, rather than entering into a metaphysical reasoning about them. What inspired the frame of his mind was the line of thinking of Comte, Mill and Spencer. viz to restrict thinking strictly within the bounds of proven facts, from direct perception and drawing inferences based on these alone.

Agarkar was a thinker of self luminous intellect. He firmly believed in intellect being the only reliable means to determine what is proper or improper, good or bad, and in the verdict it gave. To him all argumentation drawing authenticity from the Veda or Vedic tradition was futile and frivolous. Fanciful beliefs and practices rooted in the society were fought by him, tooth and nail, and so to castism and women's enslavement.

Tilak too, did not side with fantastic religious ideas and practices, and in principle, did not oppose Agargar on castism or on womens' plight. He however did not find reason to treat the crucial Hindu texts and doctrines as lacking in authority. On the contrary, he strongly believed these fundamentals as securing human-welfare, in this life and in life after death. Hence, he did not feel it necessary to flout the testimony of Veda and could not be blind to the fact that pure rationalism does not help realise the Ultimate Truth, and that pure intellect can not reach this height. He was a staunch upholder of Reason-based, Devotion-propelled Life of Action. Thus while not opposing the reforms in Hindu religion, he would not brook disowning the fundamental principals of Hindu Faith-He has elaborated his stand and ideas on the theory and practical conduct of Hinduism in an extensive article on the `Character of Hindu Religion' and condensed that in the following three verses-

"Faith in the testimony of Veda, multiplicity of the Paths, (to reach the goal), freedom of Objects of Worship-this summarises the nature of Religion. Adhering to this religion and consecrated by the prescriptions of Law, as adumbrated in the Vedic and its ancillary traditional texts; or as befitting the course of time, ever engaged in practising the assigned duty, in full faith and out of full respect to the traditional texts-such alone could be called a `True Hindu'".

Mahatma Gandhi has treated Gita as a text book on the `Life of Detachment',. Lokmanya Tilak on title-page of his Gita-Rahasya quotes the Gita verses-

("Hence tirelessly perform (your) assigned duties in a detached mind; for so doing the duties, man attains the highest reward.") `Desireless Life of Action' (of Lokmanya Tilak) is the same as the `Life of Detachment' (of Gandhiji), though with a subtle distinction between the two. Gandhiji's theorisation, which is based on Truth and Non-violence demands utmost purity of conduct, as both untruth and violence are motivated by some kind of attachment of objects, or rewards in mind, and hence purity of means becomes necessary. It is different with the Desireless Life of Action (of Tilak): Truth or Untruth and Violence or non-violence are to be contextually decided and adopted accordingly; even falsehood



and injuriousness become lawful and righteous if circumstances demand those. The very genesis of the Gita is for the purpose of a correct (theoretical and practical) understanding of the lawfulness or otherwise in inflicting injury to beings. Bheeshma's Verdict on man's duty given at the end of the `Mahabharat-War', clearly explains the distinction between the theory and practice of Duty, and the Mahabharat-stories also often bring about the meritorious nature of Violence in peculiar situations in life. Armed revolt thus becomes an act of duty under some circumstances. In the life of a nation, Krishna, the teacher of Yoga, as well as Arjun, the valiant warrior, both have honoured places, complementary to each-other and as exemplifying an integrated picture of `Virtuous Life'. Religion if practised, protects the life of man, this is the axiom at the base of righteous life.

"For protecting the righteous and for annihilating the vicious, I take birth in each and every age". This promise from the Lord clearly makes room for violence where needed. These very words form (for Lokmanya Tilak), the base of the `Life of Action' in his struggle for freedom. Rooted in truthfulness, but taking different forms, in different conditions, it is not degeneracy in values, or dishonesty or cruelty or cowardice that is preached by him; but the inward conviction of the strength and freedom of spirit and nourishment it bestows upon the nation at large. His Pran-mantra

"Self rule is my birth-right and I shall seize it."

was far more powerful than an incantation of Vedic sages. Casting off inertia and awakened to his potential strength, what wonders a Lion can do, was impressed by Lokmanya Tilak, in the minds of his country-men, throughout his life. Though a pious-religious person, he never opted for adopting modes of religious worships in any of his activities. He principally believed in discriminatory thinking and elastic application of the laws of conduct. While he ever strived for universal good and translated philosophy in to action, he was a social reformer at the same time. He always proclaimed in clear terms: "Staunchy respecting the great traditions, and with no harm to them, reforms must be carried out as suited to the times."

The allegation made upon him that, he compromised upon his principles in order to woo the masses is far from truth. He was

the man who could swallow whatever fell to his lot, with spirit undaunted.

The nation respected him as the "Father of National Unrest" and spontaneously honoured him with the title `LOKAMANYA'-( World-Acclaimed). He utilised the national unrest thus aroused as a necessary step in the ensuing fight for independence. He threw open all the gates all the highways and byways, and all directions amidst this all-sides training to countrymen. He thus prepared a base-land for further work by those, who succeeded him in the undertaking. What nationalistic education can be and what a national teacher should be is, for the first time in history, exemplified in the form of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak!

To understand Lokmanya Tilak's contribution to philosophy and practice of Education in India it is necessary to acquaint ourselves with the situation that existed in India during the 19th century.

### THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA BEFORE THE ADVENT OF THE BRITISH

The Peshwas did not pay any special attention to education, nor did they have any systematic plan for education of the people. Generally, according to the requirements of the villagers, at least one school was run in every village. Reading, Writing and Arithmetic useful for keeping accounts, were the subjects taught. Education necessary for meeting the requirements of day to day life was given. Teachers did not get a fixed regular salary. At many places they had to depend upon gifts and offerings by students or patronage of wealthy people. At some places monthly fees were charged, which ranged from 5 to 50 paise. The number of students varied from place to place. At some places it would be less than ten, at others it would be close to a hundred. Students from all castes except the Dalits (the downtrodden) were given admissions. Girls were not allowed to take education. School timings, the duration of teaching, holidays and fees were decided according to the conveniences of teachers and students. The emphasis was on rote-learning. Dust boards were used for writing. There were no independent buildings for schools. Schools were held in public places like temples and choultries or in some villages,



in the house of a wealthy man. In those days such rural schools were known as `Tatya Pantoji's Schools'.

*"In Pantoji's School, the curriculum comprised of modi script, reading, writing, tables, and practising alphabets. Learning meant practising the writing of alphabets, writing and reciting tables, doing sums of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and some mental calculations. Same things were repeated again and again. There were no qualifications required for teaching. Anybody who had the will could get a few children and open a school. Reading and writing Devnagri script was the privilege of priests. Householders learnt modi."*

The above description written around 1838-39 by Ravsaheb Bhawalkar can be accepted as a representative depiction of rural schools.

Studies of Vedas and Shastras enjoyed high social esteem. There were schools run by learned teachers and Brahmins took advantage of them. A large number of people were in family business or occupation. They used to get the necessary training in the house itself, starting from their early childhood. Mostly women and those belonging to the lowest castes were prohibited from acquiring even the basic skills of reading.

In mosques, mullahs and moulavis used to teach religious and practical matters in Urdu or Persian. At some places Muslim boys went to a Hindu teacher's school. These schools were private and were not controlled by any authority. They were totally autonomous. On the whole this type of education did cater to the needs of the contemporary society.

The English came to India for trade on behalf the East India Company, and then taking advantage of the situation obtained here, became the rulers. In keeping with their changed role, their educational policy was modified.

In 1793, while granting licence to the Company, Wilber Force made a suggestion.

*"The court of Directors of the company shall be empowered and commissioned to nominate and send out from time to time a sufficient number of skilled and suitable persons who shall attain the aforesaid object by serving as school-masters,*

*missionaries or otherwise". These objectives were the advancement of the natives in useful knowledge, and also their religious and moral improvement.*

But this suggestion was turned down for social and political motives. "In the debate held at that time someone plainly said that the British had lost America by opening schools and colleges there, and that mistake should not be repeated in the case of India." Some people were opposed to taking the responsibility of educating the natives.

In 1813 again, while renewing the Company's licence the question of imparting education to the natives came up for discussion again. Due to the insistence of some progressive liberals, it was included in the licence that "it shall be the duty of the Governor General in Council to set apart every year a lakh of rupees and to spend the same for the revival and improvement of literature and encouragement of the learned native of India and for the introduction and production of knowledge of sciences to away the inhabitants of the British territories in India".

But there was a lot of controversy about the content and medium of education whether to impart their traditional oriental education or the modern western education; whether the medium of instruction should be a distinguished ancient language such as Sanskrit or Pharsee, a regional language in use in those days, or English. These discussions were necessary, because the decisions taken were going to be of great importance for the British rule in India. The future of the British rule depended on the kind of education that would be given to the natives. The long term consequence of the new education would be the end of the British rule. At the same time this process of education, if followed step by step, would strengthen its foundations.

**Spread of Education by the Missionaries**

Soon Christian missionaries arrived in India, following the footsteps of the traders. In the early days the Company officers co-operated with them. Even in England religious institutions were asked to take the responsibility of education. In India, too, missionaries opened schools to serve the cause of education. Among them were schools for girls and the downtrodden people



too. Education was free. Only sometimes a small fee was charged. Scholarships were given for encouragement.

In the Bombay province, missionaries had started promoting education even before the Company arrived on the scene. "Mr. Hall and Mr. Nut were the first ones to start a school. They made a rule by which children of all castes and classes were eligible for admission. By the end of 1817, there were six missionary schools altogether, and they had admitted around eight hundred children. There was not even one government school at that time. The government had not even thought of educating the natives by opening schools".5 This quotation is from the 16th May 1853 issue of `Jnanoday'.

The main motive of the missionaries behind promoting education was religious propaganda and conversions to Christianity. That was the reason why the upper caste Hindus were not willing to send their children to missionary schools. Janardanpant Kirtane and Govindrao Ranade (Father of Justice M. G. Ranade) preferred to send their children to the Elphinstone college, surpassing the political agent Col. Reeves advice to put them in the Wilson College.6

An article entitled `Bombay Brahmins Boycott Christian Missionary Schools' says-

*"The Christian missionaries, alias Fathers distribute books in this country in order to spread Christianity. With this intention they have opened many schools here. The Hindu children who go to these schools, many times, do not know their own religion well. They hear the Fathers praising Christianity and criticizing Hinduism all the time. As a result, many Hindus have got converted so far, and there will be many more conversions in the years to come. Therefore, for protection of our religion, the following resolution is passed-Brahmins shall not attend missionary schools nor they hear sermons on Christianity. They shall also stop their children and the people belonging to lower castes from doing so".*

The above letter published in the 24th Sep. 1842 issue of `Prabhakar' is also noteworthy. In this context the missionaries themselves had the following opinion. "Western India proved to

be a much harder ground for missionary work than among other part of India. Prejudice against the foreigners and foreign faith were stronger here than in Calcutta or Madras. In Western India the loss of political independence of the Marathas coincided with the commencement of missionary work".

Religious education was unavoidable in missionary schools. That was why the Company authorities were against giving the responsibilities of education in India to the missionaries. They understood the importance of religious neutrality for strengthening the newly acquired political power. Elphinstone, the Governor of the Bombay Province did not take objection to the Scottish missionaries activities in Hernai or Bankot. He even gave them donations in personal capacity. But he never openly supported them as a part of his political and administrative policy.

Elphinstone was the Resident in the court of Peshwas from 1811 to 1818. In 1819 he was appointed the Governor of Bombay, and retired from the same post in 1827. He had keen interest in the education of the natives. He was of the opinion that teaching and learning in the mother tongue saved time and toil, and so if the mother-tongue was used as the medium of instruction, education could reach the power centres at different levels. He firmly believed that the vicious customs in this country would be uprooted only through education. He also maintained that the education of the poor and the funds required for it was the Government's responsibility.

In the licence issued in 1813, though the general objectives of Indian education were mentioned, the details had yet to be worked out. Elphinstone recommended new western education through regional languages-Marathi or Gujrathi.

In 1815 the "Bombay Education Society" was established for the education of the English and the Anglo-Indian children. In August 1820, a meeting of the Society was held under the chairmanship of Elphinstone. Jagannath Shankarseth, Jamshethji Jijibhai, Framji Kawasji, Mohammed Ibrahim Makwa and some respectable businessmen of Bombay were present at this meeting. Resolutions were passed regarding writing of text-books in English, Marathi and Gujrathi, giving grants to the native schools working at that time, and establishment of new schools. Another very



important resolution was passed by which the medium of instruction in those schools would be regional languages.

For the execution of this new policy `The Native School and School Book Committee' was constituted. But the scope of this committee was more extensive than the original policy of the society, so the Bombay Education Society restricted its own activities to European and Anglo-Indian students. As the Bombay Education Society thus changed its policy, in 1822 a new society called `The Bombay Native School Book and School Society' was formed.

This Society started new type of schools in native languages on the Island of Bombay. In 1824, an English school was also opened. Many parents hesitated to send their children to English medium schools for the fear of conversion.

*"In order to remove their misconceptions and make modern education acceptable to them, along with Capt. Jervis, Kashinath alias Bapu Chhatre was appointed Native Secretary on Rs. 100/ -per month".12 In 1830 Balshastri Jambhekar was appointed as Deputy Native Secretary, and in 1832, he who was in his twenties (born in 1812) was promoted to the post of Deputy Secretary. This was really a great honor to the achievement of a native scholar.*

The secretary of the `Bombay Native-' used to be a government servant and the members used to be private citizens. This institution used to get a government grant to the tune of Pounds 5000 per annum. They also collected donations from private sources. From that fund they used to run schools in Bombay and else where. There were thirteen Europeans and eleven Indians on the Managing Committee. The European persons were names like Candy, Jervis etc. Elphinstone was the first chairman followed by Malcom.

The job of spreading education in the Bombay Province was entrusted to this society. Elphinstone has many times expressed his views on education for the natives. While recommending the Institutions for financial aid, he made the following suggestions.

*"(i)to improve the mode of teaching at the native schools and to increase the member of schools, (ii) to supply them with books, (iii) to hold out some encouragement to the lower orders*

*of natives to avail themselves of the means of instructions thus offered to them, (iv) to establish schools for teaching the European Sciences and improvements in the higher branches of Education, (v) to provide for the preparation and publication of books and moral and physical science in native languages, (vi) to establish schools for the purpose of teaching English to those disposed to pursue it as a classical language and as a means of acquiring knowledge of the European discoveries, and (vii) to hold forth encouragement to the natives in the pursuit of those lost branches of knowledge."*

If the medium of instruction was to be a vernacular, it was necessary to write books in that language. Elphinstone appointed a committee for this purpose. That committee produced some really good text books.

During the years 1818 to 1827 three books were published in Marathi and all the three books were translations of English books on mathematics. During the period 1827 to 1838, ten books were published-two on medical science, two of Jambhekar's on Mathematics and Geometry, two Readers by Major Candy, Dadoba Pandurang's Grammar, and Hari Keshavji Pathare's book on Physics. From 1837 to 1847, thirty books were published, and from 1847-1857 the number rose to hundred and two. During the course of eight years from 1857 to 1864, five hundred and fifty books were published.

Till the year 1850, a Marathi dictionary with grants from the Government, Moulsworth's Marathi-English dictionary, Major Candy's dictionary, Shrikrishna Shastri's concise dictionary were published. A dictionary and Grammar were new to Marathi and was encouraging for the language.

Among the books written during this period, text-books written for schools had a large share. But it was a welcome trend that books in Astronomy, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Mechanics etc., albeit through translations, were brought in to Marathi. On the whole the number of books translated from Sanskrit and English was very large. But as time passed the number of original works increased. In the beginning the authors were mostly from Bombay and so their diction had an influence of Konkani, but later, authors who had studied in grammar schools in Pune, had their prose style influenced by Sanskrit.



Bombay was a business centre, bustling with followers of different religions. It had been under the British rule since 1665, So the Bombayites were conversant with the English culture. No wonder their mode of thinking was influenced by it. Puneites hated the English whom they considered responsible for the loss of their Kingdom.

"Robertson was appointed the Collector of Pune. One day his Secretary received an application saying, "Let us know in your reply when the British rule will come to an end". However the applicant had concealed his identity. The collector said, "Write at the bottom of the application that our Kingdom will fall only when either we get divided, or the natives get united. Not till then". Writing their remarks on the application, he gave orders to stick it like a decree near the gate of Tulsibag if the applicant did not come forth; accordingly, it was stuck there."

The city of Pune was orthodox and conservative. "A man by name Gangadhar Dikshit Phadke was a teacher in Bombay from 1820 to 1825, where he taught the English people. When he later came to Pune, he was ostracized because the Puneites thought that he could not have escaped eating or doing things not permitted in the Hindu community. In the end he had to leave Pune and lead a life of renunciation."

At the same time there was a large number of Brahmins who had once enjoyed power, but now had no patronage. "A few days back, the Brahmins were most honoured, they were the religious and political leaders. But all of a sudden they lost their prosperity and progress. Their `mantra' became powerless and they themselves helpless."

The sting of fall was still fresh in their minds. "This class of Brahmins was not only strong in numbers, but had in them the seeds of systematic governance, a good social order and ancient culture. It was on the strength of these qualities the Hindu Society stayed stable and integrated for centuries. In this class of Brahmins there was no dearth of scholars, soldiers, learned people or civilized householders. Who else was required for administration?"

Elphinstone knew that the British rulers could not afford to keep this class discontented or neglected. It was absolutely necessary to pacify their anger and win their sympathy, if the British rule was to stabilize. That was why, Elphinstone who advocated modern education through regional languages, opened a college for Sanskrit studies in Pune, on the auspicious day of Dasshera.

Shastris and Vedics were appointed as teachers in this College. Subjects like the Vedas, Grammar, medicine, figures of speech, were taught there. "At Diwali time, besides a good bath in the early morning, students were served special Diwali sweets like Ladu, Karanjya, Anarase and so on. It was all Peshwa style in that College. The British Principal was not allowed to enter the College building. It is said that on one occasion when he did, `Udakshanti' was performed."

The Managing Committee was opposed to spending money on this Sanskrit College. But Elphinstone convinced them that the expenditure was permissible because the money was spent from the amount which had already been sanctioned for Shravanmas charity. The establishment of the Sanskrit College was a part of Elphinstone's policy of the appeasement of the people and the Brahmins. It was mainly for the sake of stability for the English rule.

Later on, the nature of this Pathashala underwent a lot of change. English classes were incorporated, and ultimately it got transformed, first as the Poona College, and later as the Deccan College.

Lokmanya Tilak says, "The task of destroying self rule and establishing foreign rule is an extremely difficult task because the natives keep smarting under the insult. In such circumstances the ruler needs great tact", and Elphinstone did possess it.

The fact that he adopted two different policies for Bombay and Pune proves his cleverness.

In 1827, `The Bombay Native School Book and School Society' was renamed as the `Bombay Native Education Society', in keeping with the changed objectives. This Society enjoyed Elphinstone's support and guidance. He invited some highly respectable contemporary Indian personalities, and introduced them to the working of the Society.



In 1827, Elphinstone retired. In commemoration of his excellent services the Bombay Native Education Society decided to collect Rs. 1,20,500 for creation of a professorship in his name. In this context the following resolution was passed.

To enable the Society to erect an educational memorial to Elphinstone, people voluntarily collected a fund of Rupees 2,00,000/-. The Board of Directors contributed sumptuously. In 1834 the Elphinstone Institute was founded, which started the Elphinstone College. The English medium school in Bombay was renamed as the Elphinstone School.

Upto 1840, the Bombay Native Education Society did substantial work in the field of education in the Bombay Province. The Society used to run schools in Bombay, Thane, Panvel, and Pune. The principals of these schools used be Europeans. Though these schools were called primary schools, their nature was just like that of our middle schools. Subjects like Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Euclidean Geometry, History of England, History of India, Astronomy, Philosophy, Algebra etc. were taught there.

Due to this attitude, the Society gave priority to opening more and more primary schools of the above type. In 1840 the society ran as many as 115 schools. Inadequate funds and scarcity of trained teachers, were the two factors which brought the Society's standard down.

During 1825 to 1832, the society spent more than Rs. 2,00,000/-on book-writing, publications and encouragement awards. In the history of a native language this was the first event when rulers and thinkers made such a concerned effort.

However, later on, when the supporters of English as the medium of instruction became more powerful, the Regulatory Body of the Company Government sent a letter in 1832 expressing displeasure at the way the Bombay Province was squandering money on the native languages. Gradually the pace of the Society's work slowed down.

In those days the Bombay Government used to manage the colleges in Bombay and Pune, and also the 63 primary schools in

the Purandar Taluka in Pune District. These Purandar primary schools were unique in the sense they were different from the primary schools mentioned above. Their curriculum was similar to that of `Tatya Pantoji Schools', but the teachers were government employees. These schools were established in 1837 on the suggestion of the Assistant Collector of that region Capt. Shortrede. They were under the control of the Revenue Department till 1840. These schools were used for promotion of education of the masses.

In 1840, the Bombay Government constituted the `Board of Education' to look after the management of all the institutions. That was the end of the Bombay Native Education Society. There were seven members on the Board, out of which three were recommended by the Bombay Native Education Society. All the three were natives. All the schools managed by the Society and the Government as well as the colleges in Bombay and Pune, were handed over to the Board for management. In 1842 the Bombay Province was divided into three sectors for administrative convenience, each of which was supervised by a European inspector.

The Board opened primary schools in the villages having a population of two thousand and above, if the villagers gave land for the school and were ready to pay one anna as the monthly fee. Generally speaking, the Board continued the policies of the Bombay Native Society. In 1845 a training class for primary teachers was started in Elphinstone Institute in Bombay. In 1854 the report on the Board's performance, the following statement is found, "Considerable attention has also been paid in Bombay to education through the medium of vernacular languages It appears that 215 vernacular schools are under management of the Board of Education-the schools are reported to be improving and masters trained in the Government College have been recently appointed-. These results are very creditable to the residency of Bombay".

The question of the medium of instruction was controversial and especially in Bengal, Raja Ram Mohan Roy also insisted on English. There it was Arabi, Sanskrit or English. In 1934 Macaulay came to India. He was the Chairman of the `General Committee of Public Instruction' and the law Member of the Executive Committee of the Governor General. In his opinion "A single shelf



of a good European library was worth the whole native literatures of India and Arabia".

Such was his ignorance of the oriental culture. He did not know Sanskrit or Arabic languages and had no interest in them either. His opinion of the native languages was that they were backward. He propagated English emphatically. The Governor General Bentinck was also of the same opinion. In 1835 he gave orders. "The great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone"30

In the Bombay Province the choice was not between English and Sanskrit, it was between a regional language and English. This policy of the Governor General had its impact in Bombay too.

In 1843, Eraskin Perry became the chairman of the Board of Education. He was a supporter of English as the medium of instruction. He did not agree with the policy of the Bombay National Education Society, of using an Indian language to impart higher education as far as possible. He put forth a proposal that like Bengal, Bombay also should adopt English as the medium of instruction. But Jagannath Shankarseth, Framji Kawasji and Mohammed Ibrahim Makwas opposed it vehemently. They supported the use of Indian languages. In the end the question was referred to the Government and in 1848 the Government took the decision, "When examinations in Marathi, Gujrathi and English were conducted, it was doubtlessly proved that those who study in the mother tongue learn quickly. So, the Government's opinion is that learning should be in one's own language".

Taking into consideration the differences between the situations in Bengal and Bombay, it was decided that the vernacular would be used in primary schools, where-as in colleges English would be the medium of instruction.

By that time English was granted the status of the official language. Knowledge of English was obligatory for the Government service. The demand for English went up because of the financial benefits of knowing it. The inevitable consequence was that, schools using Indian languages began to be considered

inferior, and even in the Bombay Province English got an entry everywhere except the lowest standards.

Another noteworthy event of this period is the foundation of the `Students' Literary And Scientific Society' in 1848, by Prof. Paton of the Elphinstone College. In the same year, two branches-one for Marathi and one for Gujrathi and Parsi were opened. The Marathi branch was named `Upayukta Jnanprasarak Sabha'. Dadoba Pandurang was the chairman. `Upayukta' means useful in practical life, `Jnan' means knowledge, and `Prasarak' means one who spreads it. So, to popularize knowledge, skills, arts and other things desirable to learn, was the principal objective of this Association.

In 1850 this Association started a magazine called `Marathi Jnanaprasarak'. Its contents included articles on various subjects like Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Politics, Economics, Sociology, Stories, Poetry, drama, fiction etc.

Great leaders in Bombay like Dr. Atmaram Pandurang, Dr. Sakharam Arjun, Bhau Daji, Kero Laxman, Chhatre, Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik, Govind Narayan, Hari Keshavji, K. T. Telang, and also students who later became famous, such as Justice Ranade, R. G. Bhandarkar, M.M. Kunte, Mama Parmanand, B. D. Palande, V. A. Modak, Vishnushstri Pandit, were members of this Society.

For some time this Society managed schools for girls. Till 1854, the number of girls schools went up to nine. About six hundred girls were studying in them.

1855 to 1880. The Department of Education: In 1854, Wood's despatch about Education put an end to the Board of Education. A new Department of Education was established. Under the Director of Public Education for the four sectors Presidency, Deccan, Sindh and Gujrat-four Inspectors were appointed and they were given Deputy Inspectors to assist them. The function of the Department was to work as consultant on educational matters, manage the funds kept aside for education by the central or provincial Governments, manage a particular institute, supervise the working of Government aided or registered schools, and look after the development of education in general. A separate Department of Education was put on the right track.



With this notification issued in 1854, The University of Bombay was founded in 1857. The main function of the University was to hold examinations and issue certificates. Teaching was done in respective colleges.

Teaching of regional languages like Marathi was a controversial topic in the University too. In the beginning Marathi was one of the subjects in the University of Bombay. But in 1866-67, it was declared that, `Persons who matriculated before the close of 1863 may be examined in Portuguese, Marathi, Gujrathi, Canarese, Hindustani, Persian or Sindhi in the Bombay University Calendar.

It meant that in the course of three years, step by step, Marathi would be eliminated from colleges. So, in 1867 teaching of Marathi was completely stopped being taught in colleges.

In this circular of 1854, the place of Marathi as a medium was not denied. It has maintained that regional languages should be promoted. Yet, in reality, mother tongue medium schools were considered less important. The Department, too, did not take much cognizance of them. It is clear from the nature of the plan for primary and middle school education. The primary school which had a six year curriculum, did not teach English. But a student passing the fourth standard was allowed admission to a secondary school. The duration of secondary school curriculum was seven years. In the first three years English was taught as one of the subject, but it was the medium of instruction for the next four years.

During this period there were less controversies about the nature and medium of education. There was an integrated policy. A graded course from standard first to graduation, came into force, and it lasted for a long time.

Till this time, though the rulers showed some interest in education in general, they do not seem to have done anything for women and the Dalits. In this context, it is worth noting that in 1851-52, Mahatma Phule opened schools for women and the downtrodden i.e. Dalits in Pune. The rulers decided to give the western education to the natives, but did not bother much about the vocational or technical education, or if at all they gave any thought to it, it was not put into practice.

In 1824, the Bombay Native Education Society had started a course in Engineering. In 1844, Elphinstone school opened one too, but Pune had to wait till 1854, for a course in Engineering.

In 1845 Grant Medical College was opened in Bombay. In 1855 two professorships, one for Law and one for Justice, were created in Bombay. The part-time evening courses in Law were also run in the Government Law College.

From the generous donation of one lakh of rupees by Jamsethji Jijibhai, J. J. School of Art was opened in Bombay in 1856.

In the Director's report of the Department of Education of the Bombay province, 1855-56 there is a reference to a photography class started in the previous September which is said to have taken advantage of by many young people from Government and private offices. (Page 133)

In the same report it is said that in Purandar area many classes were run in the evening and their progress was satisfactory. But such facilities were limited and inadequate, and for years there was no addition to the number of these classes.

The University of Bombay was founded in 1857 and the first matriculation Examination was held in 1859. Twenty nine students passed in that examination. Ten years later, in 1869, thirty students graduated from the University. Out of them nineteen got their B. A. degree, two got the M.A. degree, and nine students were from other branches of knowledge. Such was the rate of progress in education.

In opening engineering and medical colleges the Government thought more of its own advantage than that of the people. Construction of roads, buildings and waterways, and treatment of soldiers or diseases would become easier due to the availability of trained people and side by side the public also would profit by it. In 1882, the `Indian Education Commission' was constituted. It was supposed to take an up to date review of the state of education and give guidance for future policies.By this time the native thinkers had started understanding the nature of western education and its positive and negative sides.

While taking decisions about the education to be given to the natives and its medium of instruction, there were lots of



agreements, for and against, put forth by the British thinkers, missionaries, Company officials, and the members of the Board of Directors. Preservation of the oriental knowledge, encouragement to study and research moral and religious reformation of Indians, sifting the good in the native culture and coupling it with the good in the western culture, these were some of the points debated. They also discussed whether education of the natives was the responsibility of the rulers for the atonement, for the acquisition of their land, and how to win the confidence of the upper strata of society which had lost its importance under the British rule.

Out of these the most powerful decisions which proved fruitful were-

1) The English rulers need a large number of class II officers to sustain their rule in the subcontinent. If these officers were to discharge their duties promptly and efficiently, they needed to be educated. In the new regime, the traditional knowledge acquired in old-fashioned schools was not going to help. So the rulers had to get a well-educated or atleast just educated class of servants. It was not only expensive and impracticable but literally impossible to bring such people from England.

   At the foundation ceremony of the Elphinstone Institute some of the Directors expressed hope that "a class of persons qualified by their intelligence and morality for high employment in the civil administration of India would be producted by the Institute".

   This makes clear with what purpose they were running the Institute.

2) A class of people would be produced, who took English education and therefore got to know the English culture and so would be in favour of the English regime "we must do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinion, words and intellect". Without education there was no other means of realising the dream of Macaulay.

3) The main objective of imparting education was spread of Christianity."Western light and knowledge should take the place of eastern culture and religion" was the expectation of Charles Grant.

4) The Anglicised class would also be helpful for trade and spread of Christianity. Though the policy of religious neutrality was adopted for the sake of political stability, it was but natural that the Christian rulers, would have, in their minds sympathy for the missionaries.

5) Since English was made the official language, the top British Officers would not need to learn the native languages in this country of many dialects, nor would they have to depend on their subordinates for the purpose of governance. On the contrary an English knowledge servant class was going to be easily available. "It is neither our aim nor desire to substitute the English language for the vernacular dialects of the country--.The vernacular languages must be employed to teach the far large classes--" Despatch of the honerable court of Directors no 49. 19 July 1854.

Although such assurance was given, it was obvious that whenever principles came in conflict with practical convenience, the rulers always gave priority to the latter.

Though the Government adopted the policy of giving western education in English medium, they had never intended to train the natives for highest posts like Generals, Diplomats or legal experts.

By making education accessible to a small group of people, the Government thought its responsibility was over. They thought that education given at the top would automatically percolate to the lower strata of the society. There was no need of any special efforts; this was the Government's role in taking education to the masses. The Government which expressed a desire to reform the natives had no intention of making primary education free or compulsory for the poor people.

The British Government also did not bother to promote vocational education. In this context it must be noted that after



taking the responsibility of the native education, only one engineering class was opened in Bombay over a period of twelve years, and that too was meant to meet the requirements of the Government. The Government policy was to be frugal in expenses on education. In the 1870-71 report of the Department of Education, the disparity between the salaries of employees in other departments and the Department of Education is highlighted. In the Department of education nobody's salaries were like Rs. 800, Rs. 700 or Rs. 600 per month. Monthly salary of Rs. 500 per month was given only to two native professors, whereas even a class III subordinate or Deputy Collector got the same salary.

Three Headmasters got Rs. 200/-per month, which is the salary of class V Judge or a Deputy Collector. A Deputy Inspector gets Rs. 100/-per month, which is also the salary a small size school headmaster. This is the minimum scale for mamlatdars.

The Director of Education complains that because of the lower grades of salary bright or really well-educated people do not like to work in this field, and even if a few come they take the first opportunity to move out for a better paid job.

On the whole, education that will help the British regime, its administration and stability, was the objective of education.

(1) Dominance of English-As English was the medium of education, it also became the language of communication of the educated class. Book writing and even private correspondence was done in English. Vishnushastri Chiplunkar and Lokmanya Tilak also were no exceptions to this rule. The prefaces and covers of Marathi books were written in English. "From this, we can see how the influence of the foreign language of a foreign government spreads in all walks of life. Marathi is banished", says V. K. Rajwade.

(2) The Government wanted the people who had acquired knowledge in English to take it to their countrymen through Marathi medium. But these people had no love for Marathi. Already a note of anger was being heard. In September 1860 issue of `Marathi Jnanaprasarak' Vinayak Janardan Kirtane writies-

"Many of us have got to taste the sweet diet of modern European sciences and Literature, and some others have got the unparalleled juice of Sanskrit language to taste, so both classes of people are neglecting their own language. Those who have studied English say "sheer nonsense. What is there in Marathi? What we have to do with it"- and those who have studied Sanskrit say-"There is nothing interesting in Marathi. Why Should we bother to study it ?"

In the end, Kirtane earnestly requests the English and Sanskrit scholars, "There are millions of your country men around you, who look up to you as their saviours from the whirlpool of ignorance. Take them out of it. Take them out of the darkness and show them a ray of light. This will give you the great satisfaction of fulfilment of your duties". (Page 183)

In the very first year of `Vijvidh jnana Vistar' in the November 1867 issue, the same note is struck at a higher pitch. In an article entitled `Marathi Bhasha' the writer says,

"In the first Convocation ceremony the chairman had said, `The purpose of these degrees and honours conferred on you is that you should make a good use of them. You must try hard to pass on the knowledge we have given you with so much effort, cost, to your countrymen who speak your language'. But has anyone followed this suggestion in practice ? Some people make an excuse saying that there are no corresponding words in Marathi. This is only a hollow excuse. The Government has appointed teachers on big salaries for the education of their people. But if they cannot pass on what they have received from others, then what is so great about taking those degrees?"

In the 1870-71 report of the Education Department, J. B. Paile has expressed the same kind of disapproval in the following words _"Even if it be granted that there neither is nor even will be an original vernacular literature worthy to take its place with the literature of the west,-but it is no reason why the educated Indian should not learn to use with force and correctness the language to which he was born, and in which alone the mass of his fellow-country men can be addressed" (page 66)



(3) Stunted Growth of Regional Languages-In the Bombay Province, Regional languages were used as mediums of instruction, for some years in the beginning. Some book writing-may be just translated text books of physical sciences was stimulated. As these branches of knowledge were new to Marathi, new terminology was created. If this policy had continued, after some time Marathi would have given up dependence on the walker of translations, and would have become not only the carrier of knowledge, but would have also undertaken original and varied book-writing. In time to come Marathi would have become a source of knowledge. Marathi, as well as other regional languages would have developed, but because of the universal dominance of English, the regional languages were suppressed and their growth was stunted.

(4) A New Awakening to History-The history of India was included in the curriculum of those days. The early writers were English men. The history books studied in schools and colleges were written by foreigners, especially foreign rulers. Prejudice, inadequacy, misinterpretation, one sidedness, and contempt for the natives appeared at many places.

"Shivaji was a Whimsical Person. Many of his deeds were evil conquering a fort or land by fighting Guerilla wars. He liked deceitful ways more than the straight forward ones. This was one of the defects of his character. He has proved his cruelty and harmfulness on many occasions".

This is a quotation from Capt. Dough. He says, "Shivaji's behaviour was just like what we find everywhere in Asia or backward countries. He showed his bad qualities on various occasions just like a king, a plunderer, or a head of dacoits tribe, in those countries. He dealt with situation as they arose. For success in his undertaking, he did not hesitate to do anything. It is difficult to call this man a man of principles. It was his principle to hate all those who opposed his religion and towards the end

he, like Aurangzeb, had started persecuting people belonging to other religions".

Even Elphinstone wrote on the same lines. He writes, "Shivaji was a son of a great General. He started his career like an adventurous and treacherous dacoit, but in the end he became an independent, sagacious ruler".

This example is significant enough. Of course there were many reactions to it.

In the April 1860 issue of `Marathi Jnanaprasarak', there was a series of articles entitled `Shivaji Maharajancha Vrittanta'. In the final article the writer says, "The foreign historians take Shivaji for a dacoit and plunderer, and many learned men amongst us have accepted this improper view. The historians who would clap for Wallace, Bruce or Tell, who worked for the betterment of their countries, would shamelessly use word of abuse for Shivaji. We wouldn't have thought it worthwhile to refute the opinions of these partial historians. But when so many Hindu Scholars do not hesitate to support this view, we feel it necessary to refute it" The articles end as follows.

"Shivaji did not have a desire to wipe out other kingdoms by fighting crooked and unfair battles. Shivaji rose against people who were making life difficult for his countrymen, and hurt the interest of those who did not belong to their religion. He rose to protect his country, his religion and his people against these onslaughts. Is it right to call him a dacoit, only because there were a few lapses on his part while achieving his goal. There is no doubt that if they bother to take notice of his praiseworthy cause, they will be convinced that Shivaji was one like Wallace, Bruce and Tell who loved their country".

In a paper read by Nilkantha Janardan Kirtane in `Poona Young Men's Association' it is said, "Grantsahib has made one mistake. While writing of Shivaji's biography he did not trust the works of a Maratha. He himself has said that the parts which defile Shivaji were taken from the writings of the Muslims".44

Around the same time, Mahadeo Govind Ranade, who was still a student, wrote harsh articles of the true Marathi nature of Nana Phadnavis. Vitthalrao Pathak told the essence of Maratha history in `Jnaprasarak'. V. J. Kirtane read a play on the senior Mahadevrao Peshwe, in a meeting held by `Marathi Janaprasarak'.



Thus there was at least a little, just a seed's, consciousness of self-respect and their ego began to wake up. Seeds of inclination for independent thinking were sown. That the need for putting forth such a view was felt, was itself great. Even the British would not have expected this to happen so soon.

The history of England was included in the curriculum. The concepts of control of the king's power by public opinion, participation of the people in governance, individual freedom, establishment of Democracy etc., became familiar to the newly educated natives, who in the beginning thought that the rulers who enforced the rules in their country would be true to their sense of fairness and enforce them in India too.

Although they showered praise on the British regime, the thought that the British would have to leave this country one day, kept on recurring to their minds.

> *"The British Government is making efforts to educate the natives through the local Government and the English people. If they educate the natives, the latter will acquire the capability for self-rule. The historical annals show that no nation which can have self-rule has ever allowed others to rule them. So it should happen in this country, and it will be for the good of both the countries India and England". This was what Balashastri Jambhekar has written in the May 1840 issue of "Digdarshan".*

Lokhitwadi too, who often praised the British rule, and mercilessly hammered the defects on the natives, is seen expressing the hope that "when people become enlightened they will gently tell the British, "We are educated just like you, why not have powers? "Then, probably, they will get the posts of Governors also. When they get powers, they will become independent like Americans, and ask the British to go back to their country. "Now we can govern our country very well. We don't want your advice and we don't want your domination". This will be the condition of our country".

(5) Loyal Government Servants-The British changed the traditional subjects and the mediums of education, but the

change was not limited to these factors. With education the mode of thinking also changed. After some time this educated class adopted even the clothing of the British. A new class of loyal government servants came into existence. This class was self-satisfied and totally cut off from the society.

(6) Lack of Religious Education-In the government run or government aided schools, there was no place either for Christianity or for any of the native religions. The moral education was given through translated books like `Balmitra', or `Isapneeti'. Students were not introduced to the religious and cultural traditions of this country. Getting it impressed on the mind or taking pride in it was far away dream.

(7) Inferiority Complex-The English medium, the western content of education, teachers indebted to the fixed British curriculum and text-books. There were few teachers who would go beyond this and enkindle a flame of nationalism, mothertongue, own religion and culture in the minds of students. Most of the student's aim was to get a government job. Very few took education for the sake of knowledge. In this condition everything English-Their language their material progress, their achievements, their ettiquettes and thoughts, their culture, in short, everything of theirs was superior, great, for most of the students. As a result, we natives are backward and can never be their equals',-such inferiority complex took hold of their minds.

**CONCLUSION**

In short the class of people who had the capacity for independent thinking and forms the very backbone of a nation, was a slave of the British. This was most unfortunate for this Country.

If the Hindu subjects would be allowed to use native languages for practical purposes, they would not follow the English, and would desire to re-establish their rule of their own religion. So Lord Bentinck insisted on English medium and his expectations were fulfilled, because, in fact, most of the people were Pro-



English. Those who aimed only at a government job, were influenced by the British rule, Still, the Indian patriots should be grateful to the British diplomats who though for selfish reasons, imparted education to the natives and allowed their gradual participation in politics."

The above remark by Acharya Javdekar is quite apt. Because of the English education, intelligent students who were not contented just with the curriculum and text-books, had a new vista of knowledge opened to them. They became conscious of their identify. They started comparative studies of occidental and oriental cultures. They began to think it necessary to preserve the immortal in our culture and couple it with the useful in the western culture. In order to fulfil this purpose, though in government services, without crossing its limits, and avoiding sychophancy, Balshastri Jambhekar, Lokhitwadi, Krishnashastri Chiplunkar, Kerunana Chhachtre, Mahadev Moreshwar Kunte, Justice Ranade and some others preserved their self-respect and began their movement of mass-education through meeting, institutions, newspapers, writings etc. Their objectives were progress and prosperity of their own nation, language, people and religion. They did imply total Independence in the time to come on the scene.

Soon after this Vishnushastri Chiplunkar spurned the bondage of the government services and founded the "New English School" on 1st Jan., 1880. After him Tilak and Agarkar took a vow of patriotism and service to the country, without even thinking of joining government service.

# 7

# Educational and Political Thoughts of Tilak

## TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIETY

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar was a great social reformer of the nineteenth century Maharashtra. Well-known educationist born on 14thJuly, 1858 and studied in Pune he advocated firmly women's emancipation through education, widow marriage, ban on child marriage and age old traditions, which are a great hindrance to the progress of society. He was the nearest friend of Tilak in the early student life and college but later, due to difference of opinion he left Tilak and the editorship of Kesari and launched his own weekly `SUDHARAK'.

We must take into account the social conditions in Maharashtra before Agarkar came on the scene. All traditions, customs, social dictates and transactions had religious sanction. Age-old traditions were powerful. The scriptures were the highest authority. The higher castes who wielded religious power dictated the rules regarding marriage, social behaviour and the caste system. Judicial powers were predominantly in the hands of the higher castes. It is in the light of this background that we must assess the work of Agarkar.

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had planned his future life during his college days, even earlier, at school, when he developed a strong yearning to see as the society. His uncle, Dattopant Bhagwat, has mentioned in his memories that Agarkar had no desire to take up government employment and had informed his mother likewise.



On completing his studies, Agarkar along with his colleagues established an educational society and embarked on his lifelong mission of educating the people.

He was the first editor of the pioneering weekly, `KESARI'. Lokmanya Tilak, Chiplunkar and other colleagues were other willing helping hands. In fact, they were indispensable partners in the venture.

He was determined to use his newspaper to educate the society but mere determination was not enough. As an editor, he had to be prepared to confront the society boldly. Knowing fully well that his views were not understood or accepted by the traditionalists, he had to repeat himself unequivocally. He had to confront hurt feeling, anger and short-sightedness. Many readers threatened him. He however withstood all these pressures.

## REFORMS: SOCIAL OR POLITICAL ?

Does social reform take precedence over political? This was the main issue of contention between Tilak and Agarkar. When the controversy was raging, the country was still under British rule. The proponents of political reforms argued that the first priority should be to instigate the people rise against their subjugation against the injustice of foreign rule. Did Agarkar not comprehend this simple logic? Did he deny the need for political reforms?

What was his stand in this respect? On this issue, Agarkar opined, " All kinds of reforms are classified as social, political or behavioural, mainly for the sake of organising thoughts. They cannot be ranked as first, second or third. They refer to different activities but total reformation of the human being and this country is what we desire and have said so many times. It seems, however, that this is not acceptable to all. Some feel that political reforms are easier and unlike social reforms they are not controversial. The common belief is that since in our struggle for social reforms we are criticised by the people, leading to unnecessary infighting, then it is better that we pitch our might for social reforms. If we agreed to the above statement and still insisted on popular reforms, then we would be worthy of the blame".

## ERADICATION OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Agarkar gave some indigenous examples to support his statement. He said that one must think whether an action was performed for profit or because it was one's duty. Once it was understood that one's duty was paramount, there was no sense debating the relative merits of the political struggle versus the social reforms. For example, adhering to the doctrine of untouchability might be in the interest of a few but one must think whether it is right in the name of equality and social justice. If it is not right,then it is one's social as well as political duty to eradicate it. In his words:

"Those who feel polluted, when they happen to walk in the shadow of an untouchable, insist that we must be independent of English rule. They argue that though Indians are black and the English are white, there is no difference in the caliber because color does not determine one's capability. Why should there be any difference in one's capability? Why should there be any difference if the touchables and the untouchables are not of different colour nor have different physique? How does colour determine the capability of a person? Who introduced this four-structured `varna'?

Who propagated the myth that Brahmins were born out of the mouth of the mythical person called SAMAJPURUSH and the untouchables out of his feet? This unfair shastra must be done away with, and we must learn to sit close to each other-the untouchables and the Brahmins-in our schools. The idea of profitability is utterly futile; our duty as human beings must be our main consideration. It is up to us to see that the unfair distinction between an untouchable and the Brahmin, a widow and a widower, a man and a woman, is rooted out. Yet the conservatives do not wish to do it; why then should they think of abolishing the difference between the victors and the vanquished? Even if they do, how do they hope to bring it about?"

In reality, Agarkar was proud to be, an Indian. He advocated social reforms out of a genuine yearning for his country's progress, hoping that one day the nation would be on equal terms with the more developed western societies.



## EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

Agarkar gave prime importence to strengthening of the institution of family life in his programme for social reforms. Because if such an institution is sick, there can be no concern about the status of women in the family. He stressed the importance of women's education. He believed that a husband and a wife were equally important members of the family. For hundreds of yeas, it had been traditionally accepted that men should earn a livelihood by working, may be away from home, while women should stay at home to look after the young ones and the elders in the family. When the needs of the society were few and the lifestyle simple, both men and women accepted the system. With the passage of time, their obligations as members of the society increased and the means of livelihood became complex. In the process,men began to assume a higher status in the family with the consequent decline in the status of women. Women's independent identity was scorned; the sole purpose in life was to serve the husband, produce children, and not meddle with work outside the home. It came to be accepted that the man should be the head of family, assume leadership in society, exercise control over communal organisations and assume proprietorship of income.

The societies decreed that a woman follows all the rules imposed by the institute of marriage even before she had acquired an understanding of what marriage involved. Nobody even remotely considered it an injustice in marrying a very young girl to a much older man. Since, the scriptures strengthened the belief that anyone who flouted the norms of morality laid down by religion was a sinner and would have to pay for his sins in the next life, it adversely affected a woman's position in the family. It was but natural that a progressive man like Agarkar whose independent thinking focussed on social progress should find the inequality of the family structures highly unjust. He suggested several measures for the emancipation of women. He particularly emphasised on the importance of women's education.

## RESTRICTION OF CHILD MARRIAGES BY LAW

Agarkar, believed that if girls stayed longer with their families and acquired proper education, their mental and intellectual

growth could be better. After marriage an educated girl would exercise a better cultural influence on her new home. Child marriages burdened very young girls with family responsibilities, making it difficult for them to cope with married life. Child marriages affected boys as well, rendering them mentally and physically weak.

With genuine fervour Agarkar advocated restrictions on child marriage by suggesting the Bill of Consent as the ultimate solution. The conservatives in society raised a hue and cry against it.

While advocating restrictions on child marriage, Agarkar emphasised the need for widow remarriage. The ban on widow remarriage existed among the higher castes, like Brahmins and especially Marathas. A widow's life in Hindu society was miserable. Agarkar advocated that the society should accept her remarriage, which would give purpose and dignity for her, life. This would also take care of the problem of forced abortions. In this matter too, Agarkar expounded the need for a law as well as social education.

## COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Many articles in the `Sudharak' exemplify Agarkar's concern for education. In fact, Agarkar spent most of his life in teaching and propagating education. On completing his education from the Deccan College, he joined the New English School on a paltry remuneration and started a career in teaching. Thereafter he joined the Fergusson College, first as a professor and then as a principal. Through his journals he educated the masses for fifteen years with great dedication. Fifteen years after Agarkar's death, in 1910, Gopal Krishna Gokhale reasserted Agarkar's view that not only mere literacy but primary education must be made compulsory for every boy and girl. He placed the proposal for compulsory primary education in supreme legal council followed by a Bill of the same nature, the year after. Because of foreign rule in the country at the time, nobody expected an immediate implementation of the Act. After Independence, a provision for compulsory universal primary education was made in the Indian Constitution, in the year of 1950. However, the provision is not yet fully implemented to this day.



## MASS EDUCATION

Agarkar firmly believed that mass education was necessary to teach people to think and curb the tendency towards crime. In this context, he said: "What better tool can there be other than mass education for protecting people's property and life?" Whipping a person, confining him to stock, securing his hands at the back, imprisoning him in a dark room, hand cutting or making him lift heavy musket balls, hanging or shooting him, are these the proper ways to punish and deter criminals?

According to him, preventive rather than curative measures for checking crime were more important; the practice of inoculation rather than using strong drugs to cure a patient was better. Similarly, compulsory education to make the people aware of their surroundings was essential. Keeping citizens in ignorance and letting them to commit crimes and then punishing them was wrong and deserved condemnation.

Agarkar cited another similie to drive home his point. He said that if the markets were flooded with rotten fruits and vegetables, then there was every chance of the rot spreading elsewhere. Was it not wiser then to prevent the spoilt and rotten fruits and vegetables from entering the market? In a similar manner, it was necessary to keep undesirable tendencies away by nurturing the mind properly through education and inculcation of noble thoughts.

## IGNORANCE: ROOT OF ALL SUFFERING

Ignorance was at the root of all kinds of physical ad mental deficiencies. Who suffered the pangs of dependence? Who found it difficult to earn their daily bread and who languished in poverty? Who suffered the consequences of ill-conceived notion? These were some of the questions raised by Agarkar who felt that the root cause of all suffering was ignorance. He said that the solution lay in the hands of the government. Unfortunately there was a large section of the society which warned the government to desist from interfering in social and educational matters. A hundred years after Agarkar, the percentage of literacy in Maharashtra hovered around 40 to 45 percent; if such is the speed of the progress of education then we still need another decade to achieve

cent percent literacy. Agarkar's suggestion that the government had to shoulder the responsibility for providing compulsory primary education has a wider perspective as can be seen from his words below:

"If you want children can learn at home or in school run by local councils or private schools as seen in Germany or in England, as in county council schools or aided schools. But, unless the Government makes education compulsory for every child between the age of six and fourteen, no adult, man or woman would ever be able to read or write his or her, own letter or sign without the help of someone. No matter, who takes the responsibility of primary education, the Government must see to it that the scheme is important".

To appreciate his views in wider perspective, we may note the following passage, "We have taken up the cause of mass education because we are sure that of all the means possible for any nation's physical, moral and religious reformation in a slow but progressive manner and also for the country to compete with the developed nations, education is a primary tool better than any other cultural implement available to mankind".

## TOGETHER AND EQUAL EDUCATION

One of the major points in Agarkar's reformist program was providing equal education opportunities to all men and women for the progress of society. He said:

"If men and women are given the same type of education, men may have to stay at home to look after the children, wash clothes, do the cleaning up, cook and grind flour. It can not be helped. God did not intend that women alone should face the drudgery, and child bearing has nothing to do with such tedious chores".

While referring the argument that because women did all the household chores there was neither time nor need for education of women, Agarkar emphasised on two vital points. One was that there was no need to have a hard and fast rule as to who should do what kind of work inside or outside the house. Besides, men should not feel it below their dignity to take up household chores.



Though everybody accepted in theory that a man and women were equally responsible for running a household, in practise it was found convenient that a man shouldered the responsibility of working outside and providing the family.

The issue of women's education is perhaps not very pressing today (though it may not be entirely true) but a hundred years ago there was a dire need for sustained effort to prepare the ground for making women's education acceptable to all. Credit for women's education today goes to Agarkar to quite an extent.

Those opposed to women's education spread the misconception that coeducation would lead to staying at house and attending to household chores, besides looking after the children. Agarkar, answered them back squarely.

## ALL KIND OF EDUCATION FOR MEN AND WOMEN

He felt that both the men and the women should take whatever education they want for whichever examinations they want and for whichever degree they desire and may, whenever they want and lead their lives the way they want. He was certain that this would happen one day. It can be said that Agarkar's aspirations have been fulfilled at least in principle today. Women's education is not restricted to certain areas alone, for, nowadays girls seek admission to courses like medicine, engineering, chartered accountancy, and different branches of science and even aeronautics. However, in rural areas because of poverty, parents are still not keen on girls' education, although there has been a change in thinking over last few years. Agarkar, was thus a true visionary to envisage a hundred years ago the direction women's education would take.

Although education and freedom for women have been largely accepted in Maharashtra for many years now, subjugation of women continues elsewhere. The struggle for women's liberation continues.

## NATIONAL FREEDOM

On national freedom, Agarkar wrote, "Loss of national freedom is lamentable. It is like losing the vital part of the brain which controls all the senses in the body. If there is no vital spirit in the

body, the body is dead. This is equally true of a nation. The conquered nation, howsoever affluent, is like a lifeless sculpture-it commands no respect, its people have no sense of either belonging, or any real pride in it. The house in which you live may have beautifully decorated rooms, but if you have no right to live there, it is not your home. You do not have any sense of belonging there, and then why be proud of the house, which is owned by someone else?"

According to the modern concept any county is not a nation until the people of the country control and restrain the rulers. None before Agarkar had defined freedom to include a democratic set-up by the government. The concept of nationhood including monitoring of the government by the people and thereby the formation of government by the people, was first conceived by Agarkar and that too a hundred years ago. Freedom meant, a government controlled and monitored by the people a concept, which is most acceptable even today. However liberal the administrators from England were, they could not negate the fact of subjugation.

Agarkar believed that the use of indigenous resources alone could not help much in developing industries. He said, "Our economic conditions cannot improve by discarding machines and machine-based industries and rejuvenating our old handicrafts. Progress by having machine run industries is inevitable. To reject machinery because the British have invented it and continue in the old rut is a hindrance to our progress. We must use scientific knowledge for our development. We must make efforts, be industrious, and experiment in cooperation with others to improve our life financially."

Agarkar studied the social character of the society from various angles. Political subjugation, obsolete traditions, lack of resources and general poverty were the contributing factors to the backwardness of a nation. He was convinced that the society needed to cultivate new values. Rationality, individual freedom, social party, enrichment of life and faith in science were the prime values he stressed on. His thinking was based on humanitarian values, belief in equality and faith in science, and not on charity or religious considerations.



**SUMMING UP**

Agarkar's educational outlook was different from other social reformers of his time. His view was established on strong belief, on rational thinking, scientific approach, individual freedom and moral values.

He gave priority to education for all without discrimination of male and female. In short, we can give important points of view regarding education.

(1) Necessity and urgency of education to society to eradicate ignorance and old traditions.

(2) Society must give importance and priority to education of girls to stop their dependence.

(3) Compulsory education to all members of the society without discrimination of rich and poor class or caste.

(4) No difference of subjects of study for boys and girls.

(5) Co-education to boys and girls and equal education and equal opportunity to all.

(6) Primary education is government's responsibility.

(7) Provision for higher education of Science, Commerce and Technical subjects. He strongly believed that the old building of society is almost collapsed, so why not construct new one on scientific education? Because education is itself a social institution affected by and affecting all other institutions.

# 8

# Tilak the Pioneer of National Freedom

Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was one of the architects of our freedom. He taught people that Swarajya was their birth-right. His teachings had a great impact on the minds of the people because he practised what he preached. Like many of our political leaders Tilak started his public life as a teacher because he regarded education as a powerful instrument of moulding the impressionable minds of students and of bringing about a change in our society's outlook on life.

## AN IDEALIST

It is necessary to study how Tilak's mind was moulded and how and why later on he took this decision to become a teacher. During his childhood his father Gangadhar Shastri, made him recite Sanskrit and Marathi verses, which sharpened his memory. During his school days, he developed a special liking for Mathematics. His sharp intellect prompted him to study the basic principles of different subjects, instead of just preparing for examinations. After passing the Matriculation examination, Bal Gangadhar Tilak joined Deccan Collage in Pune. As he was staying in the college-hostel, he could take the advantage of the college library and read books by eminent writers and thinkers on different subjects. He was also greatly influenced by the teaching of Prof. Chhatre, who inspired him to study the fundamentals of Mathematics. He offered Mathematics as his principal subject for the B.A. examination. Tilak formed a close friendship with his classmate Gopal Ganesh Agarkar who was a student of philosophy.



Tilak and Agarkar were idealist youths who were restless owing to the degenerate condition of their country. They were greatly impressed by the efforts made by Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade for enlightening the society through institutions like Vasant Vyakhyana Mala, and Sarvajanik Sabha. Tilak and Agarkar were also impressed by the writings of a young, powerful writer, Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, who appealed to people to develop a sense of self-respect, instead of imitating the British rulers. Tilak and Agarkar had heated discussions about the future course of action in life. Unlike most of their contemporaries, these two young idealists decided not to join Government service and instead work for the uplift of their country. Tilak argued that it was necessary to start political work first, while Agarkar argued that they should first strive to bring about reforms in society, and then start political work. After long and heated discussions, these two young idealists took the decision to work on the common platform of education. Both of them realized that it was necessary to educate the people in general and the youths in particular before working for either social reforms or the political movement. After taking this bold decision, Tilak and Agarkar along with Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar decided to start a High School. Shri. Vaman Shivram Apte, an eminent Sanskrit Scholar, and V.B.Namjoshi-a young idealist who was also a realist, also joined the trio. Starting of the New English School was an event which shook the student world of Pune, and as the young teachers proved their ability, the response both of the students and their guardians became more and more enthusiastic.

The trio, Chiplunkar, Agarkar and Tilak were not content with just their work as teachers. They were searching fresh fields and new pastures. They decided to undertake the work of educating the people and launched two news-papers-`Kesari' in Marathi and `Mahratta' in English in January 1881. The editorials in Kesari were written in a direct and simple style and the editor never lost sight of the main purpose of educating public opinion. The profession of journalism has its trials. Tilak and Agarkar as editors championed the cause of the ruler of Kolhapur. They however wrote something which was challenged in the court and as the young editors could not produce evidence supporting their statements, they were sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

Tilak and Agarkar boldly accepted the punishment and their prestige as editors rose, in society, During this period of imprisonment, Tilak and Agarkar picked up the thread of their discussions in college and realized that the gap between their views was widening.

Tilak made a fervent plea for political activity while Agarkar was equally emphatic about the need for social reforms. After their release from prison, Tilak and Agarkar once again devoted themselves to educational work, while carrying out their responsibility as editors. The next step in the field of education was the founding of the Deccan Education Society in 1884. This gave an institutional base to the educational effort, the next step of which was the starting of Fergusson College in January, 1885. The statement made on the occasion of the establishment of the Deccan Education Society, throws light on the ideological position of Tilak, Agarkar, Apte and their colleagues. It reads as follows:

> *"We have undertaken this work of popular education, with the firmest conviction and belief that of all agents of human civilization, Education is the only one that brings about material, moral and religious regeneration of fallen countries, and raises them up to the level of the most advanced nations by slow and peaceful revolutions."*

Prin. Apte gave evidence before the Education Commission presided over by William Wilson Hunter on 9th September 1882. His views were representative of the point of view of his colleagues in the Deccan Education Society. There was a strong plea for an indigenous agency for educational effort. It was also stated that greater opportunities for collegiate and university education should be given to the students coming from those sections of society which had a tradition of learning. The ground for this demand was that through this enlightened class education would percolate to other strata of society. This view was in sharp contrast with the view expressed by Jyotirao Phule, the great social reformer, that it was the primary responsibility of the Government to give education for seven years to students from all sections of society. He argued that the more intelligent students would then take advantage of the facilities for higher education. Phule made a fervent plea for equal opportunities for learning to all and said



that the level of enlightenment of the entire society must be raised and education should not become the monopoly of the chosen few. Phule showed a progressive vision but his plea was not accepted by the Government.

It was evident that Apte and Tilak, who came from families with a tradition of learning, did not understand the aspirations of the masses and putforth the elitist point of view which perpetuated social inequality and gave special advantages to the so-called higher communities.

Due to differences among the Life-Members of DE Society Tilak resigned from the Deccan Education Society and Fergusson College, but he continued his vocation as a teacher. He started conducting Law Classes for the High Court Pleader's examination. Tilak had passed the LL.B. exam. with merit and owing to his analytical mind, he developed a rare insight in different branches of Law and particularly in Hindu Law. He elucidated the different topics in such a manner that the students, besides getting the necessary guidance for the examination, were stimulated to think in a novel and original manner.

## EDITOR AS EDUCATOR

After the parting of ways in the Deccan Education Society, Tilak took over the `Kesari' and the `Mahratta'. Tilak regarded the work of an Editor as a sacred vocation where it was his responsibility to educate the people and enlighten them. He felt that his sphere of activity as a teacher had widened. Tilak never lost sight of the principle that a Teacher has to remain a student for life time and that a person gets the moral right to educate others only when he has studied the subject which he is teaching or on which he is writing. He read extensively and carefully and only when he was convinced that he had fully grasped all the implications of the topic which he wanted to elucidate, that he expressed his point of view through the editorial. He first gave the information about the concerned subject, then analysed it and out of such delineation of facts, emerged his editorial comment. It was no wonder, therefore, that the readers, on most occasions, were persuaded to accept his point of view. Tilak, who was a keen student of mathematics, was always logical in his argument and

was very disciplined in his exposition of ideas. Tilak did not like stylistic flourishes and always avoided rhetoric. His style of writing was simple and direct. He explained the subject but avoided superfluous expression. His style of writing was compressed and had a masculine dignity.

He mainly appealed to the intellect of his readers rather than striving to arouse their emotions. In 1886, there was a famine in Maharashtra. Tilak first carefully studied The Famine Relief Code, published by the Government after the famine in 1872. He immediately understood the significance and the implications of the Government's Resolution. In the Famine Relief code, the Government had committed itself to certain relief measures such as distributing food grains at a cheap rate, a concession in land-revenue etc. Tilak first published in Kesari, the summary of the Famine Relief Code in Marathi.

He then explained to the readers that it was the moral responsibility of the Government to implement their own decision and it was the moral right of the people to demand the relief measures, incorporated by the Government in their own Famine Relief Code. Tilak then printed a small booklet which contained the important provision of the code and, with the help of the volunteers, of the Sarvajanik Sabha, distributed the copies of the booklet in the famine affected parts of Bombay Presidency. In the then Colaba district, when the Government prosecuted the volunteers, Tilak rushed to the Tehsil town Pen and in a hugely attended meeting of peasants, condemned the prosecution. He challenged the Government to prosecute him, because he had printed the booklet which contained a part of the G. R.-The Famine Relief Code-and that as the Secretary of the Sarvajanik Sabha, he had asked the volunteers to distribute it. The collector of Colaba district was present and he then withdrew the prosecution. Tilak thus repudiated the saying that `he who can does, he who cannot, teaches'. Tilak taught the people to become conscious of their rights; he also acted boldly and challenged the Government. He succeeded because his action was based on the knowledge of the contents and also the implications of the Famine Relief Code.

When Tilak was teaching in the New English School and later on in Pune, his students were not adults and the classrooms were enclosed with walls. When Tilak started his work as Editor and social-worker, he had undertaken the job of educating adult people. This was a public-school for grown up persons and this school had no walls. Through his writings he reached a wide section of society. Although Tilak did not appoint any deputies, many enthusiastic young people in different towns and villages in Maharashtra read out before a group of adult audience the Kesari and particularly the editorials of Tilak. Thus communication was established between Tilak and the people. The editor became educator.



## EDUCATION THROUGH NATIONAL FESTIVALS

Tilak wanted to extend his sphere of education through other methods. He had read the History of Greece in which there was a description of different cultural festivals. The Greek, enthusiastically participated in them and were thus involved in the affairs of the state. Tilak wanted to involve the generality of the people in social and political activities in a similar manner. He therefore thought of starting public festivals which would become instruments of public education. He then started the Ganapati festival as a social event and got a very enthusiastic response from the people in Pune and also in some other places.

Traditionally, the worship of the idol of Ganapati was a domestic celebration. Tilak gave a new orientation to this practice and widened its significance to educate the people. He advocated that the Ganapati festival be celebrated publicly and besides the ritual of worship and Aarati, it should include lectures by eminent persons on different subjects, group singing and other cultural programmes by groups of youths. Tilak thus created a new public platform for educating the people. Tilak also launched the Shivaji Festival. He was quite explicit about its object which was the celebration of the glory and achievements of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Tilak told the people that Shivaji was a National Hero, and a perennial source of inspiration for patriotism. Tilak observed that in times when national qualities such as patriotism, sense of solidarity and brotherhood, and hatred of tyranny were absent, it was necessary to celebrate the achievements of the National Hero, Shivaji who was a symbol of all these noble national virtues.

Tilak in his speech at Amravati said," On one day at least in a year, every person should think about his village or town, about his country. He should ask himself the question whether the condition of the country was in a flourishing state or had decayed. If it had decayed, he must try to find out the means for its improvement. It is with this end in view that the Shivaji festival is being celebrated." Tilak wrote that no other hero in Maratha History was so respected by all sections of the public as Shivaji Maharaj. Tilak drew the attention of the people to the fact that the forts standing in different parts of Sahyadri ranges in Maharashtra were a living testimony to Shivaji's prowess and a number of places were remembered for their association with the exploits of Shivaji Maharaj.

In an article in `Mahratta' Tilak wrote, "Hero-worship is a feeling deeply implanted in human nature and our political aspirations need all the strength which the worship of a swadeshi hero is likely to inspire into our minds. For this purpose Shivaji is the only hero to be found in Indian history. He was born at a time when the whole nation required relief from mis-rule and by his self-sacrifice and courage, he proved to the world that India was not a country forsaken by providence".

While launching the Shivaji festival and Ganapati festival Tilak was using the revivalist method in order to awaken the sense of hope and self-confidence among the people. He regarded these festivals as a means to national awakening and also as a means to giving an ethical basis to the political aspirations. Tilak wanted to revive the creative spirit of the old times and not the form of the old institutions or religion. He regarded the traditional way of life like a tree and wanted to graft on it, the new ideas such as nationalism.

Tilak's criticism of liberal leaders like Ranade was, that they were trying to implant alien ideas in Indian soil. Tilak said that it was necessary to utilise the vitality of the indigenous way of life and give it a new orientation. He once said, "Love for one's country is a natural instinct. We have to give a new orientation to it and make people accept the ideology of nationalism". Thus, through the Shivaji Festival and Ganapati Festival, Tilak was playing a significant role as a teacher who wanted to mould public



opinion and inculcate in people the spirit of patriotism. In spite of his editorial responsibilities and in spite of his continuous efforts to give a momentum to the Shivaji Festival and Ganpati Festival, Tilak still found time to pursue his research on the chronology of Vedas with the help of astronomy. Tilak submitted a Paper to the Ninth Oriental Congress held in London in 1882. The Paper which was based on his research on the "antiquity of the Vedas" by giving astronomical evidence with the help of Vedanga Jyotisha put forth the theory that the Vedas were written during the period 4000-2500 B.C. Though there were different opinions about the proposition put forth by Tilak, it was accepted as a serious effort by Oriental scholars.

During this period, Tilak also wrote in Kesari detailed reviews of the new editions of the Mahabharat and Ramayana and stated his own theories about their dates, origin and several important and textual interpretative problems connected with them.

Apart from these, Tilak wrote extensive reviews of two important books of a political nature Dadabhai Naoroji's "Poverty and Un-British rule in India" and Digby's "Prosperous British India."

Tilak wrote the reviews under the caption `Two Good Books'. As a conscientious teacher of his readers, he first gave a detailed summary of these books, and after stating clearly the main proposition in these two serious works, analysed their contents and made his own detailed comments on them. Dadabhai Naoroji, the great sage "Maharshi" of Indian politics, showed in a convincing manner that the British Empire had carried on a relentless economic exploitation of India, destroyed its agro-industrial pattern of life and reduced India to beggary.

Both Dadabhai Naoroji and Digby had thrown light on the growing poverty in India caused by the British rule. Tilak's reviews were models of educative journalism. Tilak's obituary articles on some of his great contemporaries like Justice Ranade, Prin. Agarkar, Vivekanand, Max Mueller and Herbert Spencer, were also written with the same educative approach. In these articles he did not just pay tributes to these great men. He evaluated the significant contribution of these eminent persons, in the context of the social and political situation prevailing in India. In his article on "Vishnu

Shastri Chiplunkar", Tilak expressed his criticism of English education. He wrote:

> *"English education was responsible for destroying that essential bond of relationship between learning, ethics, religious faith and family life."*

Tilak participated in the work of the Indian National Congress from its very inception and made a fervent plea that instead of following the moderate method of petition and prayer, the Congress should create a political sanction to support their demand for political rights. At the same time, Tilak always sought an opportunity to draw the attention of the people to the problems of education. In the seventeenth session of the Indian National Congress at Calucutta, Tilak seconded the resolution on the appointment of an Education Commission. In his speech Tilak made a comparison between the Japanese and Indian systems of education and said, "It was because of the independent system of education, with facilities for technical training that Japan had forged ahead. On the contrary, education in India had dwarfed the intellect of young men. You might point out a Jagadeesh Chandra Bose here or a Dr. R. P. Paranjpye there, but let me remind you that they are exceptions which prove the rule. Our ancient system of education cultivated a love for learning and produced men, whose intellectual attainments are still the wonder of the world. Education in India had been reduced to the position of a subordinate handmaid of administration and unless it is raised to a real position of the Goddess of learning, India could not be raised to the status of the civilised nations of the West."

**NATIONAL AWAKENING**

It is argued by some people that politics and education go ill together. This observation can be valid only if politics is regard as a game for grabbing power and money. If on the other hand, politics means an effort of the people to fight against injustice and to end tyranny, education forms a major part of political action. Tilak as the leader of the movement launched against the partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon, made national education a major part of the four point progamme which developed in to a nationwide movement. Tilak always regarded education as a powerful instrument of social transformation and used it as a weapon not only in the movement against Bengal Partition but in the struggle for Swaraj. I think it is necessary to describe in some details the political situation in which national education emerged as an important programme.



In 1905 Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, announced his decision of the `partition' of the province of Bengal. The autocratic decision was an attack on the growing spirit of nationalism and the sense of solidarity among the people of Bengal. The sinister motives of Lord Curzon had become clear from his speeches in East Bengal wherein he made an effort to create enmity between the Hindus and the Muslims in pursuance of the imperialist policy of "Divide and Rule".

However, Curzon's attempt to divide Bengal, made Bengal united. All sections in Bengal, rich and poor, landlords and tenants, young and old, moderates and extremists saw in the partition an insult to their honour and a threat to their solidarity. The Partition of Bengal and people's protest against it might have become only a local affair confined only to the people of Bengal. But the trio of India's political leaders-Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal-Lal, Bal and Pal-showed great political foresight and lifted the struggle of the people of Bengal to the national plane. These three leaders converted Curzon's onslaught into an opportunity for creating national solidarity. Protests against Bengal's partition were held all over India and the people of India demonstrated their solidarity against the tyranny of the British Empire.

It is, however necessary to know the difference in the attitude of the leaders who represented three different trends of thought, three different currents in Indian politics, not merely at that juncture but through out India's freedom struggle. The first trend was that of moderate leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Pherozshah Mehta, who followed only constitutional methods. These liberal leaders rendered yeoman's service to the nation during the first phase by laying the foundation of our future political movement. But theirs was the politics of the elite, only of eminent personalities with a rare ability to represent the cause of India before the British Parliament.

At the other end, there were the revolutionaries, who believed that freedom could be won only through armed struggle. Some of them had become martyrs and their supreme sacrifice had kindled the flame of patriotism in the hearts of many Indian youths. However only extraordinarily brave persons who were prepared to lay down their lives at the altar of liberty could follow this path. The moderates and the revolutionaries were poles apart from each other in their methods. However, the common people could not follow either of these groups. There was the third group of leaders-the trio of Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Bipin Chandra Pal, who had realized that it was necessary to bring the common people of India in the freedom struggle. They therefore placed before the nation a constructive and combative programme which would develop into a mass movement.

When Bengal was partitioned, moderate leaders like Gokhale expressed their protest only through circulars, memoranda, and speeches. Aurobindo Ghosh wanted to follow the path of armed revolution. But Tilak and his colleagues, Lajpat Rai and Pal, put forth the four point programme of Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education and Swaraj. This programme enabled these leaders to involve thousands of people in this apparently modest political action. Tilak firmly believed that such a constructive and combative programme alone would arouse the uncommon strength of the common man. It must be noted that national education formed an important part of the nation-wide agitation. Tilak expressed his views on National Education, through the editorials in Kesari and through many of his speeches. Tilak never did anything in a half-hearted manner. In the editorial on the programme of boycott of foreign goods Tilak described Boycott as "Yoga".

He also regarded "National Education" as "Yoga" which implied highest level of concentration, resulting in rare skills-. He expected teachers to work with a missionary zeal. In one of his speeches Tilak said that he wanted "Graduate Ramdasis" (The followers of Saint Ramdas who aroused the sense of self-respect and patriotism in people) to carry on the movement for Swaraj. Tilak expected that teachers must have love for knowledge, love for students and the ability to develop the personalities of youth is by inculcating in them the spirit of patriotism. He expected the



guardians to co-operate with this effort of moulding and sharpening the new generation by making their wards accept the discipline of the novel experiment in the field of education. Tilak expected the students to instil in themselves the virtues of courage, truthfulness, sacrifice and above all an attitude of self-reliance. He expected educationists like Prof. Vijapurkar to make bold experiments and evolve the pattern of National Education. Tilak, in one of his speeches said that learning and character must be blended so that instead of producing clerks required for the administration of British rule, National Education would train students in such a manner that in future life they would build India as a Nation.

Tilak wrote a number of editorials in Kesari on the subject of National Education and elucidated his ideas. Tilak made a fervent plea for making Marathi the medium of instruction in Maharashtra. He observed that education imparted through the mother-tongue stimulated the thought process of students. On the other hand, while learning through English, the students faltered because they were not familiar with that language and found it difficult to express whatever they know. As a result, many students were obsessed with the notion of fluency in English and their thinking process was dwarfed. In one of his editorials Tilak wrote, "If I had learnt through Marathi, the knowledge that I have accumulated at the age of fifty-two, would have easily been gained by me at the age of thirty."

In one of the editorials he developed the idea that knowledge was power, while in one of his speeches he developed the idea. That is knowledge which liberates the mind. Tilak said that because of the rule of the British many educated people had developed a sense of inferiority. If the right type of education i.e. national education was imparted to students, they would be mentally liberated and would boldly think in an independent manner. Tilak while elucidating his concept of National Education, always emphasised the need for removing the bifurcation of the life of the people and the education imparted to them. He said, "education must make people fearless, truthful and enable them to earn their livelihood with self-respect; but the purpose of the British rulers was to create a class which would help them carry on their

administration by acting as a link between the rulers and the ruled.

They expected from this class not just obedience but a servility of what was taught in schools and colleges was a means of conditioning the mind of students for promoting in them a slavish outlook. The purpose of national education is just the opposite. We want a new generation of youths who would respect our nation. our religion and language."

## COMMUNICATING THE MESSAGE OF BHAGWAD-GITA

At Mandalay, Tilak used his imprisonment for the pursuit of knowledge in right earnest. He learnt two foreign languages, viz. French and German, in order to read the works of philosophers like Comte in the original French language. One is amazed at the long list of books read by Tilak during his incarceration in the Mandalay prison. Tilak once again felt that he would be able to play the role of a teacher of the people only if he would explain to them the message of the `Bhagwad Gita'. To Tilak, the Gita was a perennial source of inspiration. While passing through the trials and ordeals of his life, it intensified his faith. `Gita-Rahasya' was the quintessence of this life's message.

Tilak had not just read about Karma-Yoga in Bhagwad-Gita, he had lived as a Karma Yogi through out his life. He felt that the message of Bhagwad-Gita would inspire the people to lead a life of action in order to realize their dream of swarajya. Tilak, who because of his sacrifice and suffering, had become Lokamanya was confident that if he would communicate to them the message of the Bhagwad-Gita, they would try to follow it and strive for Swaraj.

Tilak was conscious of the fact that his efforts would not bear fruit in his life-time; but the ideal of "action without any expectation" as stated in Bhagwad Gita enabled him to carry on his effort vigorously, throughout his life. Lokamanya Tilak wrote `Gita Rahasya' and in doing this he was carrying on the tradition sages-Rishis-in ancient India, whose teachings transcended the limitations of time and distance. Through `Gita Rahasya', Tilak emerged as a teacher of teachers, and also as a guide and philosopher to many of his countrymen.



After his release from Mandalay jail in 1914, Lokamanya Tilak, who was the accredited leader of the whole India, directed his energies to the task of consolidating the political forces. His efforts were successful in the Lucknow Session of the Indian National Congress held in 1916. The last five years of his life were full of hectic political activities and he hardly had any time to give impetus to the effort of national education. He taught people the lesson that Swarajya was their birth-right and that they should strive to get it. In his speeches on the political ideal of Swarajya, he time and again referred to education as a powerful means of instilling the spirit of patriotism in youth. On 17th April 1917, Lokamanya Tilak delivered a speech at Chikodi, near Belgaum and the subject of his speech was `My ideal of Education'. In that speech he made a fervent plea for free and compulsory primary education. He told the people that through national education, they would become conscious of their right to get Swarajya and would also realize that it was their responsibility to strive for it.

Tilak made a fervent plea for the spread of education. However, owing to his traditional mental make-up, he did not advocate the cause of women's education. He was brought up in the society dominated by men and he, therefore, felt that the primary duty of women was to look after the family and bring up children. When a female High School was started in Pune, Tilak wrote against it. He was of the opinion that if at all education is to be given to girls in schools, it must be such as would make them good mothers and efficient house-wives. His views were diametrically opposite to those of Prin. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar who wrote in his journal `Sudharak' that there should be co-education and that education imparted to girls should not be different from the education given to boys. When there was a growing demand for women's education, Tilak said that time was not ripe for such a reform. He did not want to oppose the prevalent conservatism in Hindu society so far as women's education was concerned. When Prof. Dhondo Keshav Karve started a residential school where widows were given admission, Tilak did not write anything in support of that effort. In 1916, owing to the efforts of Prof. Karve, the first women's University was started in Pune, Tilak did not welcome that event, which had a great social significance.

When Lokamanya Tilak went to England in 1917, with the help of Barrister Baptista, he brought out an excellent pamphlet `Self Determination' which made a fervent plea for Home Rule in India. Tilak sent copies of this pamphlet to all the editors of newspapers in England and also to the members of British Parliament. When one of his followers asked him about this, Tilak said, "We have to educate the British people about the conditions in India and I am confident that owing to our pamphlet on self-determination, I would ensure the support of the Labour Party to our cause."

Tilak had sown the seeds of the ideal of national education. After Tilak's demise when Gandhiji emerged as the leader of the freedom struggle, he gave great emphasis on national education. After the non-co-operation movement of 1920, Gandhiji asked many of his followers to dedicate themselves to the work of national education. The Gujrat Vidyapeeth at Ahmedabad, The Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth in Pune and many Rashtriya Shalas were started in different parts of the India. In Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth at Pune, teachers like Acharya Bhagwat, Acharya Jawadekar and others, while delivering inspiring lectures on politics, history and literature, inculcated in students a national outlook. Almost all these students participated in the Satyagraha movement in 1930. Thus the seed sown by Tilak had grown into a huge banyan tree. Tilak titled as `Lokamanya' by the people of India, is regarded by all as one of the main architects of our freedom struggle. However, it is equally necessary for us to understand the significance of his efforts for giving a new orientation to education and developing it as an instrument of guarding our freedom.

# 9

# Lokmanya Tilak: The Propounder

## INTRODUCTION

"It is the purpose of Education to till the soil of the existing social order and to plant the seeds from which new forms, new social orders grow. When the soil is recalcitrant and unyielding, resistant to the natural forces for change, more radical processes emerge" (Sociological Foundations of Education: Ruhela & Vyas, Dhanpat Rai and Sons, New Delhi 6 April 1970, Page No. 332). Edmund W. Gordon, an American Educationist has pointed out these views. At the same time it is to be noted that Education is a process of human enlightenment and empowerment for the achievement for a better and higher quality of life. A sound and effective system of education results in the unfoldment of learners' potentialities, enlargement of their competencies and transformation and their interests attitudes and values. An enormous potential of education must be utilised for national welfare. National welfare can be achieved only when there is national awareness in the minds of the people filled with national spirit. And national spirit can be achieved only when there is spirit of nationalism. Nationalistic theory of education is one of the important theories of education which provides strong philosophical base for the field of education.

## NATIONALISM

"Nationalism may be defined as a state of mind in which the individual feels that everyone owes his supreme secular loyalty to the nation or state" (Encyclop Britanica, Page No. 851).

Nationalism, precisely defined as above, is a modern concept. Throughout history men have been attached to their native soil together with the traditions of their parents. But before 18 th century nationalism was not a generally recognised sentiment moulding public or private life. Because of its dynamic vitality and its all-pervading character Nationalism is often thought to be very old. But it is the historical fact that American and French Revolutions may be regarded as its powerful manifestations.

Nationalism as translated into world politics implies the identification of the state or nation with the people. The end of the 18th century observed that Nationalisation of Education and public life went hand in hand with the Nationalisation of states and political loyalties. Poets and scholars were the first torch-bearers who began to emphasise Cultural Nationalism.

## THE ROOTS OF NATIONAL FEELING

Before the 18th century there had been evidences of National feeling among certain groups at certain periods. These were the periods of stress and conflict. As far as Indian history is concerned we shall find ample situations of National feeling during the continuous historical stream. But the span of the concept of Nation was limited to a particular period and province or state. In western countries development of Nationalism stressed National awareness as well as national individualism. During the 17th and 18th century, western countries had undergone different critical changes in human life-style. The common standards of western civilisation were-the regard for the universally human, the faith in reason as well as in common sense, the survival of christian and stoic traditions. These standards were too strong to allow nationalism to develop fully and to disrupt society. Thus nationalism in its beginning was thought to be compatible with cosmopolitan convictions and with a general love of mankind.

## NATIONALISM IN ASIA

The concept of Nationalism began to appear on the Asian Screen after World War I. The progress of Nationalism in Asia is reflected in the history of the League of Nations after World War I. Among the league's original members there were only 5 Asian



countries China, India, Japan, Thailand and Iran. After World War II India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma and Malaya were the Asian countries getting independence from the British Commonwealth. The period between World War I and World War II was a period of ripening of nationalism in Asian countries.

## INDIA AS A NATION

India or Bharat as a nation is not only a geographical concept or a political ideology but it is supposed to be a collective soul of all Indians. Yogi Arvind has expressed this idea in his words-It is always observed and examined by the historians that whether India was a nation in ancient or medieval ages is questionable. Inspite of the fact that India was not geographically a nation, there was strong feeling of patriotic nationalism during those days.

This was the national feeling from the mountains of the Himalayas to the waters of Kanyakumari. During British regime this `national feel' was being challenged and smashed down by the British rulers because rise of nationalism was totally dangerous for their foreign rule.

## TILAK AS EARNEST EDUCATIONIST

Tilak and Agarkar were meditating as to how best to devote themselves to the service of this country after their university education. They came to the conclusion that the spread of education of the right stamp among the rising generations was the best method of working for the country's uplift. Their plans of national education were taking tangible shape in their minds. Both of them were highly impressed by `Nibandhamala' of Vishnushastri Chiplunkar. Tilak was more kindred to Chiplunkar in spirit, particularly in his vivid sense of pride in India's past and in his utter disdain for the theory of considering the British connection as providential.

The new school of thought came to be known as the `Tilak School' of thought as opposed to Mahadev Govind Ranade's. Members of the Tilak school of thought were the earnest educationists who had strong faith in education as the tool of social change.

**Objectives of the D. E. Society**

On 1st January 1880 New English School was started by these ardent educationinsts. The institution was then expanded into `The Deccan Education Society, which conducted several high schools & colleges in future. The principle object of starting this institution was to provide such education for the coming generations as would create in their minds love for their country, respect for their forbears and pride in India's past. Before the New English School opened, there were many educational institutions in Maharashtra and other parts of the country. But these institutions were Anglicised and there were only the job hunters and clerks who were the finished products of these institutions. The objectives of the founders of the Deccan Education Society, together with Lokmanya Tilak, were to produce through this institution patriotic and self respecting persons. They also aimed at cheapening and rationalising education by a legitimate and natural emphasis on mother-tongue as the medium of instruction. `Tilak School' was the coterie of young patriotic persons who decided to take up the work of spreading education of proper type in India.

New English school rose high in the estimation of the Government, the general public and it was highly honoured by Maratha Princes. His Highness, Sayajirao Gaikwad, Prince of Kagal state and many others visited and helped the school. Dr. Willian Hunter who was president of the Education Commission recorded his unreserved admiration in the following words:

"Throughout the whole of India, I have not witnessed a single institution which can be compared with his establishment. This institution can rival and compete with not only the Government high schools in the country but may also favourably compare with the schools of other countries".

Principal Wordsworth says, "This institution is an embodiment of the new spirit that was rising in India. The school would certainly leave its impression on the future events in India. The Times of India admired the efforts of these educationists (20-2-84) saying that these enthusiastic educationists will preach love of the Country to their disciples". According to Tilak, the object of National Education was not to disturb the freedom of personal expression of the students. To create national awareness patriotism, love for country and national unity for getting freedom were the main objects of National education according to Tilak.



Tilak had to introduce the National Education movement because Lord Curzon had obstructed the right of personal expression of the students. This was against the right of freedom.

**TILAK AS AN INDIAN JESUIT**

Tilak's educational thoughts, especially about nationalistic education, evolved out of his own personality as an Indian Jesuit. Jesuit is a devoted missionary who offers his life for his mission. Tilak, in his later life, evolved as a public leader. But earlier he was an educationist. The first chapter of Tilak's public life opened in the field of education which he entered with the zeal of a missionary. We get a glimpse of his unbending spirit, his tenacity of purpose, his indomitable determination, from his work. When he was living at Deccan College he discussed the importance and practicability of establishing private schools on the model of missionary institutions.

There was no difference of opinion as to the necessity of native private enterprise in education. The only point of discussion was how to make this private enterprise successful. Self-sacrifice was the only means for men in existing circumstances that time. How to maintain the quality work was also a point of discussion. After several rounds of discussion the team of these educationists came to the conclusion that " if we applied ourselves to the task with the determination of carrying out our ideas at any sacrifice, it was not an impossibility, though it might be a long time before it could be accomplished".

Tilak was in a position to make up mind for the cause of awakening of our country in respect of getting out of western impact on public life. The best way he thought, was to rouse people to a consciousness of their own way of indigenous life. Tilak was the leader of the team of promoters of the New English School. The sacrifice and selflessness of the promoters bore fruit and it made rapid progress.

Before Tilak entered the field of education, a feeling had been growing that christian missionaries, though seemingly benevolent,

had virtually become masters of the education of Poona children. Self-respecting Indians felt the want of a national system of education. The New English School in a way was considered as a counter-blast to the mission-schools. In this way Tilak & his team played the role of Indian Jesuits in the field of education.

## PROPAGANDA NATIONAL EDUCATION

Tilak frequently visited different places and went on lecturing over National Education and swadeshi.

Tilak addressed a meeting at Sholapur and told his audience that national education is that type of Education which would make the students conscious of our Nation. He said that English was a difficult language and a student had to waste many years to gain knowledge through English. He also added that the younger generation must obtain knowledge upto the age of 15 years which the old generation could not gain up to 35. He remarked that Government money belonged to the public. He further stated that Government might not like the idea of national education, and it might put an end to it. After his speech he met some rich people and collected funds for the cause of National Education. People responded well and Tilak was successful in his mission.

On March 3 1908, Tilak visited Barsi. There also he appealed to the rich to help the cause of National Education. Addressing a meeting at Barsi Tilak said, "To be able to read and write alone was no education. They were simply the means of its attainment. That which gave the knowledge of the experience of their ancestors was called education. We are not given such education as may inspire patriotic sentiments in us. In America the Declaration of Independence is taught in the fifth or the sixth class. In this way they train their children in Politics".

He insisted on religious education and expressed his frank view about English language teaching. According to Tilak there was no reason why the study of English language should be made compulsory.

## ARTICLES IN KESARI

Tilak wrote several articles about education in Kesari. These articles were the editorials reflecting Tilak's thoughts on education.



There are 31 articles on education, of which 3 articles are specifically on National Education. Though Tilak emphasizes National Education in these 3 articles, all other articles also reflect powerfully his ideas about education. He writes about Military education, as well as he writes his views about the medium of Instruction. He had expressed his strong views about the functioning of the universities. He also discussed the philosophical foundations of education, taking into consideration the aims and objectives of education.

Though Tilak promoted Nationalistic Education his outlook was broad and his ideas were comprehensive about Nationalistic Education. Inspite of being a political leader his concept of education was clear, pure and extensive. He advised that an Independent country should always observe educational progress, educational changes and educational developments in neighbouring countries. Selection, omission and moderation in the field of education should be a usual process in an independent country. According to Tilak, Nationalistic Education doesn't mean neglect of others' educational theory. Nationalistic education always respects the educational systems of different countries. But at the same time Tilak expected that an Independent Nation should evolve its own educational system based on the cultural heritage, history and socio-economic conditions of that particular nation.

Tilak expressed his views about nationalistic education with special reference to inculcation of spirit of Nationalism in the minds of the educands. It is the duty of the educators that they must be able to inspire the educands in respect of the feeling of Nationalism. The spirit of Nationalism gives a peculiar perspective to the nation. Nation gets the direction. There remains no ambiguity about the aims and objectives of education if the starting point of discussion would be nationalism. Nationalism encourages community life; it also inculcates feeling amongst the students.

In a way national education movement was the outcome of swadeshi movement. Tilak emphasised national Education as one of the four pillars of the political movement in India. Maharashtra Vidya Prasarak Mandal was established in 1906. The Samarth Vidyalaya was being conducted under its auspices at Kolhapur.

Prof. V. C. Vijapurkar was the torch-bearer of this activity. Samarth Vidyalaya was then shifted at Talegaon, near Poona; it was an institution having nationalistic pattern of education. Prof. Vijapukar was a devoted educationist having unmatched vision and perspective about national education. Tilak had taken much interest in the development of this institution. He had a campaign of lecturing for raising the funds for the institution.

The Samarth Vidyalaya at Talegaon was an idealistic educational institution where bookish knowledge had no place. The students used the text-books but they were made conversant with work-experience. Agriculture, tree-plantation, basic industrial training, physical exercises for physical fitness, and different types of work-experience were included in the curriculum of the Samarth Vidyalaya. The finished product of Samarth Vidyalaya was a perfectly developed person having love for his country, devotion of work and community feeling. Paisa-fund glass work of Talegaon was another venture of nationalistic workers. It was expected that the students of the Samarth Vidyalaya at Talegaon could also be given some technical education in the workshop and glass factory.

Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth (Pune) and many other `Rashtriya Shalas were the extensions of movement of National Education in India. At Yeola, Apte Guruji had established a National School which was an output of the movement.

These schools could not grow more and there was no acceptance of them in future. The reason was mass education. Most of the institutions were dependent on grant in aid given by the Government. National Schools did not take the grants. They had to raise their own funds. They had to find out their own ways for solving their problem. Gradually national education movement had a set back and it remained then as an illustrative pattern only.

## POLITICAL EDUCATION BY LOKMANYA TILAK

Power is basically neither good nor bad. A democrat needs power and a dictator also needs power. What is important is the use or misuse of power. Because of the blatant misuse of power, the word politics has got a bad odour. Political Education, therefore, has remained a neglected area in social sciences and not much work has been done not only in India but also abroad.



J. P. Naik, a well-known educationist and founder of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) and many other institutions, has given a serious thought to the concept of political education in the post-independence period. According to him, education means knowledge, skills and attitudes, necessary for the development of an individual and that of society. Political education, therefore, means knowledge about the political system, skills for the maintenance and growth of the political system, and necessary attitudes and values to bring spirit in the political system.

The objective of political education can, therefore, be stated as the training of individuals to be intelligent, effective and responsible citizens through imparting of knowledge, building up of skills and cultivation of values.1 All these three elements are significant and have to be developed together, each conditioning the other. Mere knowledge does not serve the objective of political education which requires effective participation based on appropriate skills. Similarly, unreflective or ill informed participation is equally undesirable; and neither knowledge nor participation will lead to the desired social changes unless they are both governed by a proper value system.

Every political system operates in a given society which has its own political culture, distinct from that of other countries. The political system, for its maintenance and growth, requires certain knowledge, skills and values on the part of the people. The process of political education gives knowledge, tries to create skills and inculcate values congenial for the working of the political system. As the society consists of divergent groups, the dissatisfied section in society can be given political education for the overthrow of the political system. If this attempt gets necessary support by the people, there is a change in the government and in the political system.

J.P.Naik has further explained the concept of political education. He explains the kinds of knowledge, skills and values necessary for Political Education.

(a) Knowledge: Political Education needs knowledge of the following.

(1) the existing society

(2) the new society that the nation desires to create; its value system etc.

(3) the existing government of the country

(4) the basic problems facing the country in different walks of life

Knowledge of the facts mentioned above changes according to time and place.

(b) Skills:

The essence of political education is participation in action. A citizen must be politically not only intelligent, but also politically effective i.e. he must be able to assist the political system to function properly (or oppose if he wants to create a new system) to correct aberrations therein as well as to devise strategies for influencing and achieving change in the desired direction. This will need the following skills-

(1) skills of understanding and education of the present political system

(2) skills of problem solving

(3) skills of working in groups

(4) ability to understand conflicts of all kinds and to develop proper relations to them

(5) ability to express himself adequately on political matters.

(c) Values: Every social and political system is based upon its own unique frame of values. Some of these are fundamental and absolute.

**POLITICAL EDUCATION UNDER THE BRITISH RULE**

Under the British rule, the policy was to divide the Indian people and rule. They always argued that the Indians did not deserve a self-government. Deliberately created attitude of superiority dominated till 1947. Their objective, therefore, was to educate a class of persons who would act as the interpreters between the rulers and the ruled. The British preached the superiority of England over India in almost every field and inculcated a loyalty to the crown. The nationalist attitudes and values were ruthlessly suppressed treating them as indiscipline



and revolt. Western knowledge through British education, efficient centralised government, increasing means of communication like post, telegram, construction of roads etc. Maintenance of law and order in the subcontinent helped strengthen the belief of Western superiority and hide the real imperial interests of exploitation. The face of modernisation skillfully concealed the ugly face of imperialism. As a result, the illiterates as well as the literates extended legitimacy to the British raj.

Tilak learnt the following things as the components of knowledge needed for Political Education.

**Knowledge of the Existing Society**

Tilak witnessed that the Indian people were suffering from an inferiority complex and had lost all hope and confidence. The Indian civilization was passing through a period of uncertainty and disintegration. India was ruled by an alien power for over a thousand years. Through this long age of darkness, the Indian civilization lost its dynamic vitality. The impact of the West in the form of British political domination came as the necessary stimulus to its reawakening. This reawakening created moderates who believed in the Divine dispensation of the British raj with which Tilak did not agree. On the contrary he challenged the cultural superiority of the West that lent legitimacy to the imperial rule. According to him a foreign domination brings a sense of inferiority which constitutes a great source of weakness. Tilak's analysis of contemporary situation gave him the clear perception that politics was a game of worldly people and not of Sadhus (Saints).

**Perception of a new society**

Tilak wanted freedom as a precondition for the development of society. `Swaraj is my birth-right and I will have it' was not just a rhetoric for him or just an emotional tool to achieve independence. He claimed that people had a right to claim freedom just by virtue of their becoming a human society and that no further justification was necessary. "We are human beings and as such we have the right to be free".

He looked up on freedom as the Chaitanya of a nation and maintained that it was vital for the very existence of any human

society. He observed that "Just as self emancipation-mukti-is the ultimate aim of any individual, freedom is the ultimate aim of any nation 4. Freedom is a boundan duty, a moral obligation and `Purusharth' for every individual."

His conception of swarajya cut across the divisions of castes, sex and religion. In his view caste and religion had no place in public life, though in private life he generally-but not always-observed some of the orthodox practices. The overriding consideration for him in deciding his stand on a public issue was the political unity of the Indian people so as to press effectively their claim to Swaraj. Swaraj for him was not a mere replacement of foreign by native rulers. It visualised more than national independence and was defined in terms of the freedom of the individual; national independence was a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for it.

He asserted that Swaraj was a moral necessity and the achievement of Swaraj was the Dharma of all self respecting men and it was Bharatdharma for the Indians. In his opinion politics can not be separated from religion.5 The reason for political education and political action was not merely the injustice of foreign rule, not merely the arbitrary partitions of Bengal but achievement of Dharma for every individual.6

It was with this firm conviction that Tilak and the Nationalists set out to arouse the nation to political action for the creation of its own destiny. He stressed that history and tradition, religion and philosophy, action and unity were all made meaningful in the concept of love of the country.

This was the vision about Indian society by Tilak and his followers.



# 10

# Tilak's Views on the Existing Government of the Country

Tilak thoroughly understood the phenomenon of British imperialism and the full implications of Imperial relationship. Emphasing the truth that empires are founded necessarily for promotion of national interests of the Imperial powers, Tilak, intelligently brought out the contradiction of interests inherent and inevitable in this very relationship. He explained that foreign domination was bound to lead to a total moral degradation and material deprivation, a total emasculation of the subject people. This results in the loss of very necessary human qualities which make social and individual living meaningful. He therefore, rightly insisted that it would be nothing but a political naivety to hope that imperial rulers, however liberal and progressive otherwise, would ever perform the role expected of an agent of modernization and development. He did not distinguish between the conservatives and the liberals.

He, therefore, once said,7 "For the last twelve years we have been shouting hoarse, desiring that the government should hear us. But our shouting has no more affected the Government than the sound of a gnat. Our rulers disbelieve our statements or profess to do so."

The crude behaviour of the British at the time of famines (1875-76) and at the time of plague in Pune (1897) hardened his attitudes towards the British bureaucracy. Tilak clearly saw the attitudes of racial inequality on the part of the British bureaucracy. Even though Tilak knew liberal streams like Individualism,

Democracy etc. in the British thought and education, he experienced that ultimately the Imperial interests prevail over the liberal thought.

He also took notice of the fact that the British Government did not respond to the honest demands of Indian politicians as they had hoped. Points of reference on which Tilak's assessment of the situation was based could be cited as 1) a feeling of general despondency 2) deteriorating material conditions-increasing poverty 3) dwarfing of the educated, and 4) apathy, hatred and rude behaviour on the part of the British rulers. Tilak felt the need of exploring the myth of `benevolent imperialism'. Instead of accepting the British contact as Divine Dispensation and putting his faith in the bonafides of these `generous' imperial rules, Tilak thought it necessary to investigate the true character of the basic relationship between Great Britain and India. This brought him face to face with many a basic political and social issues. Knowledge about the basic problem of the country facing in different walks of life. The basic problems which Tilak identified were:

(1) need of creating a sense of national pride based on the values in Indian history and culture
(2) his belief that the British rule was imperial in nature and in no way of Divine Dispensation. He, therefore, was dissatisfied with the moderates' programme of prayers and petition
(3) it was the legitimacy given by the Indian people to the British rule, which was an obstacle in the way of Swaraj
(4) understanding of the need of bringing the masses in the mainstream of the national struggle
(5) belief that violent revolutions were not successful without enough popular support
(6) the need of political education to the masses-though poor and ignorant-for their organisation and politicization. They were only to be made aware of their true potential assuring them that their future rested entirely in their own hands.

Once Tilak obtained knowledge about the prevailing socio-economic and political situation, he used different skills on different occasions for the achievement of the goal of mass awakening. He realised that only possession of knowledge is not enough. Active participation of the masses in the political process is equally important for achieving the goal.



Tilak was a fine combination of a philosopher, an activist and a teacher. He was intelligent, fearless and a man of highest integrity. He practised what he preached. Once he understood the basic problems of the country at different levels, he applied his mind and used different techniques for those problems.

He wanted masses to understand the naked interests of the British rule, inadequacy of the methods adopted by the moderates, awaken the people about their servility and chanelize that awareness towards the desired goal of Swaraj. He was intelligent enough to exploit the contradiction in the British administration. He skillfully used liberal principles in the British administration against the ruling imperial attitudes.

In this process he clearly saw the obstacles and chose and used the techniques accordingly.

In this part, an attempt is made to study Tilak's 1) skills of problem solving 2) skills of working in groups 3) his ability to understand conflicts of all kinds and to develop proper relations to them and 4) his ability to express himself adequately on political matters.

**USE OF NON-VIOLENCE**

Tilak has been accused of believing in violence, yet it was he who first urged non-violent political action.9 He advocated the need of mobilizing the people because Indians were, then, not in a position to use arms. He was not sure about the success of violent methods without enough public support. He had sympathy towards the militant revolutionaries because of their cause and not methods.

He visualised that there were three enemies in his way of political education of the masses. They were 1)the British bureaucracy 2) the missionaries and 3) the moderates. He posed a formidable challenge before them.

The British bureaucracy was the vehicle of Imperial policy and Tilak used all possible means of creating unrest against it. We

will discuss the same in the following pages. As far as Missionaries are concerned not only that Tilak disliked their role, but even leaders like Vivekanand and Mahatma Gandhi held that they were the deadliest poison and worried as the missionaries became active at the time of famine. As far as the moderates were concerned, Tilak viewed that they were not going to the masses and were helping the British in their policy of divide and rule. Moreover, the roots of the moderates were not in the Indian soil but in the west. He, therefore, ridiculed them and made their mockery.

Tilak was successful in reaching the masses through the employment of national and religious festivals. His purpose in starting the Ganapati festival in the new form was two-fold. He wanted to provide an alternative to the Moharrum of the Muslims. He also wanted Hindus to come together regardless of caste or education on a common platform. He brought Ganapati on the streets and the Ganapati Worship be came the jubilant festival of all the Hindus. Even the Muslims did not perceive it as communal and they too joined the festival.

Tilak saw that the country had sunk low under the British rule and needed spirit for rejuvenation. He, therefore, started a festival to revive the memory and glory of Shivaji, the liberator of Maharashtra and restorer of Swaraj. Emphasising the spirit of Shivaji, Tilak wrote, "It is the spirit which actuated Shivaji in his doing that is held forth as the proper idea to be kept constantly in view of the rising generation." Everybody at that time knew that Shivaji festival was political in nature. Therefore, it was not held as anti-Muslim and some Muslims participated in the festival.

Tilak worked tirelessly to reach the people and to educate them through the festivals. He carried his doctrine throughout the Maharashtra and waged his battle. Theodore Shay beautifully narrates Tilak's skill in utilising these two festivals for national awakening. He says, "Education through religion and history, through the association in the popular mind with gods and heroes, through recreating an appreciation of the heritage of the past as a guide to the future-this was the way he conducted his battle. He soon became the first articulate spokesman for the no-longer-silent, tradition directed masses of India. He became the defender and the awakener of India's philosophy of life".10 Through this



political education he insisted on the willingness on the part of the masses to meet the problems of the day and solve them morally, which was the greatest need of those days.

These festivals gradually became popular even outside Maharashtra and Tilak's leadership crossed the regional boundaries. Because of his achievements through these festivals, the moderates were pushed back to the rear and the youth were attracted towards Tilak because of his mass political rallies with the help of religious festivals.

### KESARI AND MAHARATTA

Tilak did not fail to understand the importance of newspapers for political education of the masses. The news papers started by him `Kesari' (Marathi) and `Mahratta' (English) became popular. Especially Kesari made history and became popular even among the illiterates in rural areas. N.C.Kelkar wrote, "Through his paper, the Kesari, he exercised an immense influence over the masses and it is this influence that is mainly responsible for the infusion of a new spirit among the people".11

Looking at the rude behaviour at the time of famine and atrocities at the time of plague in Pune by the British burequeracy and police, Tilak wrote fearlessly. He condemned the inhuman aspects of the British anti-plague campaign. His speeches and especially writing in `Kesari' sent him to two years' imprisonment.

However, as N.C.Kelkar rightly points out, "His arrest and prosecution in 1897 was a sensation that nearly pulled the mind of the country by its roots, as political prosecutions were then extremely rare, and Tilak was, in himself, a man big enough to mark an epoch by his personal misfortune."12 The British miscalculated both, the effect of this imprisonment on Tilak and on public opinion.

### NOW HE BECAME A NATIONAL HERO

For two decades Tilak was persecuted by the British Indian Government as they saw in him the real challenge to their empire in India. But this gave him an acknowledgement as a national political leader. "He emerged from prison with the responsibility of leading the nationalist cause to political self-determination

(Swatantrya). He was acclaimed the Lokmanya, the honoured and respected of the people".13 He was acused by the moderates as `Telya Tambolyanche Pudhari' (leader of the masses-in present terminology, leader of the other Backward classes OBC's. But now it became an honour for him. He was acused by Valentine Chirole as `Father of Indian unrest' but it became a feather in his cap and brought glory.

`Mahratta' an English news paper did the same job for the English speaking population, even though on a small scale.

He was careful to confine his agitation within legal limits. His arguments were logically appropriate and convincing so that people could clearly understand their interests.

**TRISUTRI (THREE DEVICES)**

With a view to have a base among the workers, Tilak attempted to promote the concepts of Swadeshi and Boycoatt. He was somewhat successful in this attempt.

However, the partition of Bengal provided him the right opportunity to bring the British administration to their sense. Basically the three principles of Boycott Swadeshi and National education were intended for effective and practical political action and gradually they became an integral part of Tilak's programme of political education for the masses.

Boycott of the British manufactured goods was started to bring economic pressure on economic business and jeopardize the foundation of the whole British administration. Then, boycott became a political weapon and became popular through out India.

Swadeshi was intended to be the counterpart of boycott. It meant self-help and self-dependence in Indian economy. National education was provided as an alternative to Western education begun by Lord Macaulay. It involved the establishment of schools throughout the country dedicated to give Indians a truly national education.

The objective of this programme was Swaraj. The above mentioned three devices were developed initially as a reaction to the British partitioning of Bengal. But soon it became an all India programme of political education for national awakening and



national liberation i.e. Swaraj. Swaraj became the reason and justification for the entire programme and movement. Swadeshi, boycott, national education and swaraj were not to be separated from each other. Swadeshi, Boycott and National education were the integral parts of Swaraj.

Tilak wrote furiously and addressed numerous public meetings to advocate the Trisutri. He realised the target well and carefully thought about the means to be employed to politically educate the Indian people.

In this campaign he invited Muslims to join him. It is interesting that

(1) several Muslims participated in Ganpati festival and Shivaji festival

(2) Tilak himself participated in Muslim festival `Moharrum'

(3) Mr. Jinnah became an ardent disciple of Tilak and the later insisted that Jinnah should fight his legal battle in 1908 when he was arrested for seditious editorials.

**FIRST MASS LEADER OF INDIA**

In this way Tilak became the first mass leader of India. He became popular in all the castes and all the religions, among the educated and uneducated, among the rich as well as the poor.

After the announcement of six-years sentence, immediately there was a great outburst of popular feeling. Riots swept throughout Bombay, and demonstrations were held throughout India. Tilak became a national martyr and a popular hero, even according to the British press in England. Now even the moderates' faith in British justice became shaky.

**HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY**

Hindu-Muslim unity was always the major component of Tilak's political education. In 1914 the World War I began and Tilak returned from Mandalay after six years of deportation.

Now it appeared that he became a little moderate and advocated Home Rule instead of `Swaraj'. But he insisted that Home Rule was the right of the Indians, the `Dharma' of the Indians. Nobody can separate Home Rule from the people.

After the return of Tilak the years of political inactivities were over. The Home Rule Leagues were more effective in arousing the nation to political activity than the moderate Congress.

For the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity, he brought about the famous Congress-League scheme, (1916) a joint programme of common and co-ordinated effort for the goal of self-rule. For the first time in the struggle for Indian independence the organised Muslim community worked with the Congress; and the Congress, moderates and Nationalists stood again united.

**RAISED ISSUE AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL**

The Treaty of Versailles (1919) is welknown for the principle of self-determination to the nation-states. Tilak wanted to represent India at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 in France. But the British Government did not allow him to do so. Theodore Shay observes, "Had Tilak been free to attend the Peace Conference and to discuss personally India's case with the American President, Swaraj would have been attained sooner."

His second attempt of internationalising the cause of India's independence was his visit to England to file a civil suit against Chirole. Unfortunately he lost the case, but during his stay there he made a common cause with many, contributed to the fund of the Labour Party and many supporters to India's cause.

When he returned to India, he came as the uncrowned king of the nation to which he had dedicated his life.

There was always a value base for Tilak's political education. Even though he was a hard realist and pragmatist his objectives and the methods selected by him for the political education had value orientation.

He looked upon political freedom, the objective of his education, as a moral obligation, not merely as a natural right but a moral necessity. The political freedom was a bounden duty and Purushartha for every individual. He believed that Human mind is a combination of `Divine' and `Animal'. He, therefore, wanted to educate the `Animal' and incarnate Divinity in the human beings. In this way his justification for Swaraj was based on values.



He believed in democracy and therefore always advocated the concept of popular sovereignty. Tilak through various methods and techniques taught to the people that the real sovereignty rested with the people and not the king or a coterie of rulers who were holding formal power. Therefore, he justified `Praja-Droha' (right to revolt) if the government had no moral support of the people. He linked the urge for liberty and democratic rule with increasing political awareness.

His concept of Nationalism was also not romantic or negative in nature. It had secular bearing and welfare of the Humanity was its ultimate goal. He did not favour aggressive nationalism.

Theodore Shay, therefore, says, "His message, his political philosophy, must not only be remembered but clearly understood, in Maharashtra, in India, and also, because it has a world significance in the world else we shall be the poorer for not using the legacy he has left behind".

# 11

# Awakening Masses Through the Editorials of Kesari

## INTRODUCTION

Lokmanya Tilak, originally a devoted teacher had an urge to educate the people. Naturally when he entered the field of journalism as an editor of `Kesari' in 1887, he continued his mission as a teacher on a more vast and multi-level field of people's education. The object of this paper is to evaluate his editorials in `Kesari' from the educational point of view. His editorials covered various subjects and enlightened the people at large.

The titles, the sarcasm, the use of plain and simple language, proper illustrations from day to day life, oratorical style and quotations from Sanskrit verses, etc. are some of the special aspects of his editorials. He could easily awaken the masses through his writing. He is aptly described as the father of Indian unrest on account of these editorials.

Kesari's Oath is the awakening of the people. It makes Tilak write with affection for the people. To awaken them fully he tries to get them used to writing and reading what is logical and rational. The solid basis of Lokmanya's writing is rationality. Lokmanya uses, a number of quotations, shlokas, sayings, similes and illustrations and linguistic devices. In his editorials he has set-up a model of writing that is measured to the point, logical and based on evidence and proof.

Appaji Vishnu Kulkarni was the writer of Lokmanya Tilak. He has written a book called `The last eight years of Lokmanya'.



On page 28 of this book, he says, `The editor puts before the people his own intentions through his editorial. It is a kind of one sided dialogue with the people. Hence it definitely requires fluency in language and oratory. Tilak used to dictate his editorial orally and spoke so fast when his mind was crowded with thoughts that the writer found it difficult to take it down'.

## A PLANNED USE OF INGENIOUS TITLES

With his very titles Lokmanya seems to appeal directly to the readers heart, e.g. `Is the government on its senses?' (6-7-1897), `Principal-the guardian of beasts or babies' (with a pun on `Pal') (9-7-1918), `It is dawn but where is the sun?' ( 9-7-1918), `What about India?' (8-8-1905), `Tilak is out what next?' (14-11-1916). These titles show how Lokmanya excelled in giving titles that were interrogative and created curiosity. Similarly he would create interest with strange types of titles like `The udders of a male buffalo' (3-9-1907) `The Christian emperor became a Brahmin' (6-4-1915) `It was good he spoke' (19-2-1907). He used various meaningful maxims also for titles like `Darkness under the lamp' (26-2-1907) `Mountain out of mole hill' (18/25-12-1894). `New bit of a stick, new rule (20-4-1904) `A mouse out of digging a hill' (3-12-1901). Such titles kindle the curiosity of readers and prompt them to read the editorial eagerly. Moreover, they help the reader to remember them for years together.

Frequently at the beginning of the editorial, Lokmanya used a Shloka or a saying which suggests the trend (direction) of his thoughts. A saying or maxim seems to give to the reader at the first glance the essence of his editorial. In an editorial entitled `The greeting of Sir R.P.Paranjpe' (16-12-1919) Tilak used a Shloka from the `Geeta' which conveys the main point in it. `Anger leads to bewilderment, bewilderment to confusion of memory, that to loss of intellect and that leads to death'.

Such a Shloka from the `Geeta' used at the very beginning suggests the loss of intellect of a scholarly mathematician like Wrangler Paranjpe. In the editorial obituary written after the premature death of Namdar Gokhale (23-2-1915) Tilak's use of the saying `Burning for a moment is better than to remain smoking for ever' suggests how Namdar Gokhale's death had created a

terrible vacuum. Similarly this quotation from the Mahabharat conveys the pathos in Gokhale's death and some idea of his short but bright life. Writing on 18-6-1895 on the very painful death of Agarkar, Lokmanya tries to soften the grief of readers by quoting the universal truth `salute to Time who's influence makes everything to come to be forgotten'. In the editorial written on 25-8-1903 after the scholar Professor Juisivale passed away Lokmanya said `speak the truth, follow religion/duty, do not stray away from your studies'.

### USE OF QUOTATIONS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE EDITORIAL

It is not only at the beginning or the end of the editorial that shlokas or quotations are used, they are used in the middle too. In the editorial written on 13-7-1887 to convince the reader of the point that rulers should not boast that they alone are all powerful, there is a quotation from the 16th section of the Geeta `I am God Almighty, I am the possessor, I am perfect, mighty and happy, I am rich nobly born. Who else is there like me?' This quotation describes perfectly the false boastfulness of the rulers. In a similar manner Lokmanya wanted to point out that the Montague reforms would be of no use to us. He pointed this out in an editorial entitled `The male buffalo's Udders' (3-9-1907) using a quote from Hitopadesh `What is the use of the cows that can have neither calves nor give milk?' He thus, convinced the readers that the Montague reforms would be as unprofitable as the buffaloes that cannot be milked.

Lokmanya in his editorial uses very appropriate quotations from Raghuvansh, Panchatantra, Hitopadesh, Mahabharat, Uttar Rama Charitra etc.; because he wanted his thoughts to create a solid concrete impression on the readers' minds. The quotations from influential writers like Kalidas, Bhavabhuti, Vyas, Valmiki helped to create the desired effect.

### PROPER USE OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

It has been a traditional practice to use similes, metaphors, illustrations for explaining the thoughts suggested in the editorial. Lokmanya uses this practice at appropriate but very few places. He wrote an editorial on 6-10-1900 `Lord Sandhurst's reign in which he made the point that Lord Sandhurst depends solely on those working under him and yet expects good administration. He expresses the point thus "Lord Sandhurst's administration resembles the careless or foolish bullock cart drivers who trust the cart to the bullocks and expect them to drive it well". Tilak in his editorial `Mr. Bruin's death' (1-8-1905) describes the position of the suspicious British officials after Rand's murder saying, "Government officers were in the habit of mixing with people but now the state of the government is like the eagle living in the nest built over the volcano of suspicion". Lokmanya implies here that the British government is mighty like the eagle. But this mighty government is without any reason responsible for self-destruction and using the metaphor for `the state of the government to be like the nest on the volcano of suspicion'; Tilak explains the whole context.



### PROPER USE OF METAPHORS

Of and on Tilak's editorials use very naturally metaphors too. In his editorial `Principal or guardian of beasts or babies?' written in connection with Principal Wrangler Paranjpe (13-4-1920) Lokmanya uses a metaphor, `The huge elephant of public opinion ready for self rule'. Or in an editorial entitled `Wanted to do one thing but something strange happened' (26-6-1917) he uses simple short metaphors and several metaphorical expressions like `The Jambalum of freedom does not drop of its own in the mouth' and also long extended metaphors. Tilak wrote an editorial called `New small wooden stick (i.e. a play thing)-new rule' (20-4-1920) to point out that the rulers being dependent on the officials will not change unless the officials themselves are changed. Lokmanya says, "The bull that has learnt blindfolded to go round the fort of officialdom will never try to break and enlarge the hole in walls of officialdom and rush into the fort. A new untrained bull is necessary for that." An illustration or extended metaphors like this from the daily life in villages would seem attractive to ordinary people.

Lokmanya tries to convince us about his points in connection with Marathi grammar by giving a lovely illustration, `The method of writing the Marathi language (6-7-1904). He says "It is the

grammarian's duty to remove the mess in the language. Just as it is desirable and necessary for women to comb and braid their hair so is it necessary to refine words in a language". But cutting or shaving of hairs is not included in combing of hair. In the same manner grammatical refinement does not include stopping the growth of words or cutting them off. Even in the present time this illustration is applicable. Several such illustrations are often found in Lokmanya's editorials. They enhance the literary quality of the editorials and at the same time make us realise the necessity of convincing people by using simple illustrations.

## VERY SIMPLE ILLUSTRATIONS FROM DAY TO DAY PRACTICAL LIFE

Many of the illustrations in this context convince us that an editor must make his readers understand his point with illustrations from daily life. At one place, Lokmanya tries to explain in his editorial `Lord Curzon's rule' (29-8-1905) what Curzon does in reality when it is said that he loves the Indian subjects, that he cares for them. Lokmanya says in this context that Curzon's love and care is like what we do to our cattle at home-we care for our cattle after we stop getting frightened at them as we make them harmless by breaking or moulding their horns. Everybody used to have milk-cows in those days so that both the readers and the government could appreciate the illustration. Lokmanya tries to make this point clearer in his editorial `Philosopher and Diplomat' (18-9-1906) and says, "Just as it is a sin to kill a swan laying golden eggs and a milk-cow similarly it is an act of terrible lack of wisdom to harass and displease the people in India when the British have in their hands the golden land of India and get unconditionally Rs. forty crore every year. British diplomats are fully aware that Indians have to be given enough food, just as one of the udders has to be left unmilked for the calf. But if they do it, we must always remember, it is not out of generosity but of selfishness. A milk-cow and calf is a very simple illustration from daily life that Lokmanya uses to make people understand his point.

## USE OF FOLK-STORIES TOO

Lokmanya clearly states his thoughts in his editorials referring to stories from Hitopadesh, Panchatantra, Aesop's Fables etc. Really



speaking this method was established by Vishnushastri Chiplunkar's Nibandhamala (series of essays). Lokmanya refers to Aesop's Fables in an editorial called `This is what should happen but will you do it?' written on 16-10-1894. He uses it to convince people that a proud man like Lord Harries will never admit that his conduct is unfair. Lokmanya says in this editorial "Since a man has made the painting he has shown a man holding the lion's mane and to make him bend but what the lion says is very correct i.e. if the lion had drawn the same picture the exactly opposite thing would have been seen". Tilak in refuting the progressive party's argument that without social reforms we would not be competent for political reforms uses one fable from Aesop in his editorial entitled `Ways of social reforms (28-11-1896). He says it is because of the caste-system that we have retained our Indianness and remained alive for thousands of years though not independent. If we lose our Indianness we would lose whatever we have. Moreover this hare does not exist and the other is not obtainable, we would, like the dog in Aesop's Fables going with a piece of bread in his mouth, be deprived even of food. Not that reform is not desired but its ways are different. This example from Aesop's Fable is easy for readers to understand.

## THE USE OF STRANGE WORDS

Tilak's writing contains a good deal of sarcasm. The Pune Chitpavan Kokanasth Brahmins are rather famous for their sarcastic speech so are Lokmanya's editorials full of sarcasm. Such sarcastic sentences often contain new strange words that achieve the desired effect. Tilak writes very sarcastically about Pandita Ramabai Ranade in an editorial (12-1-1904) called "The learnedness of Panditabai"-the title itself being sarcastic. He says "She who thinks of Panchagavya (a mixture of five things including milk, curds, butter, urine and dung of cow.) as fake considers `Baptismodaka' to be sacred. Forming a new word `Baptismodaka' of a mixed type Lokmanya ridicules in this editorial Ramabai Ranade's basic frame of mind. Criticising her, Lokamnya says "She should remove the Hindu blot in the degree of `pandita' (a scholar) and use the secret degree of "Reveranda". One of the sarcasms is connected with the mixed strange new word Baptismodaka (Baptisma + vadka-Christian (English) and Sanskrit

mixed) and the second example of derision is suggesting the feminine `Reveranda' of Reverend in place of `Pandita'. In a similar manner writing sarcastically in the editorial, `the necessity of an Adopted son?' (20-11-1893) Lokmanya says `In the perfected stage of man it was necessary to have a son for the continuation of his name but obviously it is no longer necessary now. Is Sambhaji the reason why we remember Shivaji? Is the name of Nana Phadanvis found in history because his wife adopted a son after Nana's Death? Excepting name how many adopted sons in the rising revolt were seen to be good oldies? Tilak has tried to explain to his readers how ridiculous is the idea of the adoption of a son for the continuity of the family name.

Along with such examples Tilak has also used a number of sarcastic words. This sarcasm emerges very strongly when Tilak writes about the British officers Lord Curzon and Sandhurst. Many derisive expressions like `Sandhurst's Chattering', `Sandhurst's circle', `Sandhurst's gift' in connection with Sandhurst. Likewise he has ridiculed Lord Curzon `Lord Curzon's few cool utterances' `the talkative (chatter box) Viceroy', `Twelve great deeds of Lord Curzon', `Lord Curzon's Advice' are some of the strange and derisive expressions used by Tilak to judge and ridicule the administration of the officials like Sandhurst, Curzon, Harries etc. This style does not resemble that of Acharya Atre. It is his own special style which is more like that of Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar.

## ORATORIAL STYLE

Lokmanya uses a number of examples to prove that a certain statement or argument is wrong and thus with his oratorial style reverses the whole sentence. e.g. to ridicule the statement that good (domestic/social) state implies good political state, Lokmanya gives remarkable historical examples. In an editorial (2.3.1886) called-" What first ? Political or Social" Lokmanya says "What several people seem to believe viz. that a certain type of domestic (social) state would lead to a certain type of political state is not proved on the basis of history. Shivaji founded the Maratha kingdom (rule). The Peshwas crossed on horse back the Ganges and the Indus and unfurled the saffron flag-Did they manage it on the strength of girls studying in the fourth standard at school?



Were Shivaji, Mahadaji Shinde, the elder Bajirao born to girls married at the age of twenty five ? Did the Marathas and the Brahmins live together at that time ? Or was the word `Sati' (widow burning herself on the dead husband's funeral pile) unknown then ? There is no proof whatsoever to believe that the social state then was specially good."

Lokmanya often writes referring to or addressing somebody. The titles illustrate this but even the content of the editorials suggests it, since he preferred oral dictation to writing the matter himself.

We have considered some examples of Lokmanya's oratorial style in his editorials. The editorials were orginally not written by him but often dictated and the writer would take them down. Hence, those editorials often create the impression of being purposeful, designed writing with an oratorial style. But the editorial seems like a speech too.

## NO POETRY BUT AN OCCASIONAL ARTISTIC TOUCH

There is no place for poetry in Lokmanya's editorials but the style shows an artistic touch in the occasional use of similes, illustrations etc. It does have a bit of artistic colour. The following example used to suggest how the Montague reforms were deceptive is important in this context. In the editorial with an interrogative and artistic title `It is dawn but where is the Sun?' written on 9-7-1918 he says, "The Montague political reforms are like the mental state of the people who wait eagerly for the morning and the sun-rise since the morning breeze is blowing, the chirping of birds is heard, "the cock is crowing and then feel sad because there is no sunrise in spite of the morning." That is to say Tilak shows the emptiness of the Montague reforms by asking the discerning question, "Where is the sun when there is the light" of the Montague reforms and daybreak. He stresses in fact the point of the meaninglessness of the Montague reforms.

There is one more example that can be considered in this context. Lokmanya answered his opponents when they started asking about what had happened to the fund collected for the memorial of Shivaji Maharaj. This answer suggests the types of experiences one comes to have in public life. In an editorial with

a compact title `The festival of Shivaji's death anniversary' written on 9-4-1901 Lokmanya says, "The wind has to clear off the clouds on the Sun", repeatedly and every public topic to a certain extent is similar to this situation. It is the duty of the organizer of a festival to point out the mistakes in the objections made by some dull-witted people.

Lokmanya Tilak wrote an editorial with the title `A New Small Wooden Stick i.e. a new plaything-new rule' four months before his death. It, too, contains artistic language. He concludes the editorial on an extended metaphor and thus shows a rather different kind of style. He wanted to point out to the people that for all of us yearning for self rule it was not proper to wait longer. In this connection Tilak says in his editorial `Navi Viti, new rule', "How can he who wants to be a moth remain for a long time in the state of a caterpillar? Hence busy yourselves with being moths by selecting new ways, new people fit for the present-time and be determined to taste the sweet juice of the beautiful garden of self rule. Our only request is that you should not be deceived by the temptation of a caterpillar". Here too by removing some people and selecting new people and new means (not weapons) i.e. material, he suggests people should fulfil their desire. He thus seems to induce people to be men of action.

## NOT HUMOUR, BUT SARCASM

Humour, like poetry, is found as an exception in Lokmanya's editorials. There is plenty of sarcasm, derisiveness, though these two are the basic weapons of his legal argumentation. But the sprinkling of humour is rare. Observing that in place of the Marathi method of writing a new ugly method of writing was being used Lokmanya wrote an editorial called `The method of writing Marathi language on 12-7-1904 `. In it he says, "The British government may well rule over us but it is not a law that it should rule over the short and long marks in the Marathi language, nor was it the wish of the government when it was suggested that the alphabet Ga, Ma, Bha, Na should be taught instead of A, aa, i, ii etc." Lokmanya came out with an editorial called `The murder of our Alphabet` on 4-10-1904. In it he says sarcastically," Children will learn `Ga' an easy letter with two lines and if after Ga, Na, Bha, Fa, and Pa are taught it would be convenient to introduce `Dha' to students (Dha-a pun suggesting dullness). The person who has thought of this strange thing must be completely ignorant of the science of language or a grammarian belonging to the Kha-khu category.'(again a pun on Kha-khu which suggest ironic laughter) such are the very few limited but very fitting instances of humour that we find in the editorials. But these few instances easily give us an idea of Tilak's sarcasm and mild sense of humour. The peculiarity of the style is the total absence of vulgar humour.



### Euphemism

Sarcasm is often expressed in a euphemistic manner. Euphemism implies expressing bitter feelings in sweet words. Naturally such speech and writing are sarcastic. In an editorial entitled `Raobahaddur Ranade's rare skill (agility) of argumentation' (7.6.1887) Lokmanya writes sarcastically "Vamanraoji Modak refrained from peace and forgiveness" instead of "Vamanrao Modak was very angry." At times Tilak uses oblique expression. He says in the same editorial "R.B. Ranade ventured once, in consideration of the country, the time and occasion, to break, to stun coolly and patiently the whole group of scholars with his strange `Gaudbangal' oratory. It was not at all necessary for us to share his hopeless, despairing contentment. But R. B. Ranade's implied and open challenge has awakened Kesari to prove the leader of the progressives individually faulty and to prove that the assurances given by Vamanraoji and Kesari are evidence based. The sarcasm lies in Lokmanya's reference to `the Gaudbangal' that is strange, tricky oratory and `despairing' contentment.

## SIMPLE SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Lokmanya's sentence structure mainly contains simple sentences. They are never long sentences but they have a force and a special speed. Such sentences therefore, appeal directly to the readers. These sentences have the speed of the bullets fired from a rifle and moving swiftly towards the target. When Tilak takes the aggressive stance of refuting something these sentences acquire a rare speed, a rare force and passion and then seem almost to run fast one after the other. But when on some occasion

Lokmanya speaks sarcastically his sentences like those of Agarkar, become long, long-winded. The words in the sentences become shy and one feels the strong twist in the sentence. In his editorial entitled `Government and the Barisal affair' written on 5.5.1906 Lokmanya says, "These days some officers are playing mischief in connection with the swadeshi movement in that on the one hand they fault us externally for our following English discipline and English law and internally manage enviously to keep the government from being tainted with blame by punishing in the name of English discipline funning and expelling a boy because he wears swadeshi clothes or requests others to do so and on the other hand they issue tyrannical circulars like the Lion Circular which are useful to those conducting the swadeshi movement in a constitutional and peaceful manner in danger."

The typical Chitpawan Kokanasth Brahmins are inclined to speak sarcastically e.g. if it is said to a Poonaite that it is very hot or that it is raining heavily he is bound to answer, "well, if it is not hot in the hot season will it be in the rainy season ?" The editorials contains many such examples of sarcasm of mild humour.

**SELECTION OF WORDS**

Since Lokmanya wrote for both the ordinary and extraordinary people, he was in the habit of using mainly easy and simple language. His written language resembles more spoken language so that he naturally uses all types of words from daily life. He creates a new alternative Marathi word for the English one but does not necessarily use it. He did not hesitate to combine words from different languages and form a compound one. Nor did he feel it strange to use a weighty Sanskrit word in the middle of words from spoken Marathi. Depending on the occasion he prepares even new words and takes special care to make the whole language business easy and simple. Because of all these factors Lokmanya's style is different by nature from that of his contemporaries.

In his editorial (31.10.1893) called `The table of the Bombay Province Budget' he has put together in one sentence all the names of departments-`Civil, Excise, Customs, Salt, Stamps, Revenue, small departments, Justice, Marine, Religion, Medicine, Stationery,



Pension etc.' He has used the English words-Famine Code, Budget, Native, Royal Commission, Jubilee, University, Book, Committee Member-as they are. He has not made the language difficult and complicated by using alternative burdensome, heavy words. But Tilak also uses a word like `live poisonous particles' for the English word `Virus'. Similarly Tilak uses an expression like Government labour-factories for Universities printing certificates. He frequently uses English words with Marathi case forms. e.g. `Deligetani', `Memberakherij' (without) `actapramane' (like) etc. The Marathi language in his editorials shows at many places a turn for the court-Nara the language and it is of course very natural e.g. `if a member is dead, these societies (or assemblies) need not be registered like the Company Act', `waiting for the successor's certificate' etc. Words from the court or law are very frequently found in his writing-words like a rough draft, condition, order/ decree etc.

When Lokmanya uses a Marathi alternative he gives a group of words explaining the word and not one alternative for another. He uses simple words like `Shahari' or `City people' for `urban' and `villagers' for `rural', `Agricultural Relief Act' is translated into a simple act for making farmers debt-free and not `Krushak Runvimochan Vidhi'-a different sanskritized translation inspite of his being an excellent sanskrit scholar. That was because his stand was that what readers were to be able to understand had to be written in a simple language by the editor. Lokmanya was not one of those who believed that a new language is created in an artificial manner. He believed that language is a physically habituated thing. Here he has also used an experiment in word like `tongue habituated' Tilak did not insist so much on words but gave thought to readers in his use of words.

**LOKMANYA'S EDITORIAL PERSONALITY SUITABLE FOR PEOPLES' EDUCATION**

We have always thought and still think of Lokmanya Tilak's image as that of a lion, a fearless fighter. This fighter's strategem sometimes contains a small battle at other times a fight with the enemy; some times an aggressive stance and at times defence tactics. But most of the time it is a straight confrontation, a cluster

of arrows flying. Every word in Tilak's editorial has the power like a bullet from a rifle to hit the target-the enemy's vital spot. Yet Tilak's weapons of words never strike at what is good in the enemy, not even unconsciously. He fights with somebody on a specific occasion but as soon as the occasion ends, no enmity remains between Tilak and him; his relations with his `enemy' do not remain spoiled. He does not retain permanent enmity with anybody. Tilak always admits that principles are bigger than a person. This quality of a journalist is very rare.

He, who has this generosity and appreciation of merit, can guide people through the newspaper and inspire them to do the correct thing. Hence it would not be an exaggeration to say that Lokmanya's editorials of `Kesari' were like the morning hymns moulding the Indian people's minds in those days. All these editorials bring before us forcefully his editorial personality. An editor should consider personal malice, jealousy, one's own dignity or humiliation, different types of pressures, relatives as subordinate and he should give greater importance to principles, fight for principles, the ultimate welfare of the people-this is the important principle of editorial writing that Lokmanya set down.

The self rule that Lokmanya hoped for was democratic. He continuously laid stress on National education, profound patriotism, loyalty to the country so that our democratic system would be sensible. He accepted journalism for the sake of people-oriented politics to educate people, to make them wise and he took on the role of the peoples' teacher. He started a variety of different things. He had creative leadership. He did not merely keep making suggestions like a non-playing captain nor move about like him with folded hands. When occasion demanded he himself got down in the red soil, in the wrestling ground of conflict and fought with the government. He retained the firmness of words not their shallowness. He himself became the example of an ideal editor. He was not a mere talker nor did he ever adopt the stranger's role of telling a few ingenuous things. He repeatedly proved that he was a creative worker and not a mere word-user.

Another important peculiarity of Lokmanya Tilak's editorial personality is that the work he undertook, was voluntarily accepted for educating people. Lokmanya Tilak was an editor fully aware



of the power of newspapers. In an editorial entitled `The more the coal is whitened, the more it remains black' written on 13.3.1917, Lokmanya says, "It is not the duty of newspaper writers to entertain people with coloured vapid stuff printed on glossy paper." He further says," Influential newspapers in independent countries act as peoples' political teachers". He adds in the same editorial "The true use of newspapers is to check the despotic (tyrannous) government rule (political power). Even today, the role attributed by Lokmanya Tilak a hundred years ago to the true journalists and editor's duty has not changed. Hence one feels like calling him `The father of editorial writing.' This makes it clear how Tilak had a full understanding of his own work.

`Kesari' started on 4.1.1881 but Lokmanya actually became the editor of Kesari on 23.10.1887. Lokmanya had written some 20-21 editorials during these 6-7 years. The editorial on `Which first? Political or Social' written in 1886 led to a violent intellectual clash between Tilak and Agarkar. Agarkar left Kesari and started his own independent newspaper called "Sudharak"-i.e. `A reformer'. Even before Tilak came to take the responsibility of Kesari's editorship on his shoulders Tilak had already become free by resigning from the membership of the Deccan Education Society. He had completely freed himself from the school and the college that he had started out of his intense longing for national education. He had left the educational field and on his own had the daring, the guts to enter the more vast/extensive multi-levelled, multi-purpose field of peoples' education that is the field of the newspaper. The national education phase of his life had ended and what he was to face was the huge problem of the whole nation's life. He saw very clearly the realistic and horrible picture, of the state to which the British government rule had reduced India. Hence, he considered Kesari's aim to be `to describe the state of the nation' and bring about the enlightenment among the people through newspaper as a medium of education.

## THE STATE OF OUR COUNTRY

Vishnushastri Chiplunkar, Lokmanya's teacher, has written an independent essay called `The loss of freedom'. Lokmanya felt intensely the wretched state of the country due to `loss of freedom'

and foreign rule. Vishnushastri wrote a long article or a series of articles in which he made clear all his observations, his views, his hopes and motives, and showed the direction of the future. Lokmanya wrote fearlessly and in detail on the British government rule, its imperial attitude, its tyrannical / oppressive acts and in a way brought out the state of our country. Lokmanya wrote promptly whenever some incident took place, when some occasion demanded, on the British government system, its emperical spirit, British officialdom, British financial and industrial policy, its treatment of agriculture and taxation, its selfish educational attitude etc. This writing is naturally in the form of reaction. But when a scholar, philosopher and foresighted, bold editor like Tilak writes on such topics, his reaction is not merely an emotional expression but it brings to light the truth of principle behind it. In every editorial of Lokmanya, hence, importance is given to rationalism, intellectual strategy, logical argument, base and evidence behind the writing. Lokmanya's Kesari editorials were written in response to incidents or some cause but they are in essence suggestive of principles.

### THE FATHER OF INDIAN UNREST

Lokmanya is referred to as `The Father of Indian unrest.' This unrest was created by him through the Kesari editorials. Ordinary readers do not deliberately read philosophical books but they do read newspapers. They take interest in the daily incidents that take place around them. The reader is awakened when a journalist points out the different meanings of that incident, and clearing off the mystery behind it, suggests the possible consequences of that incident. Gradually his mind and his opinion get formed and he may even be ready to act. This is what unrest means. Lokmanya created against the British government an unrest system and its officialdom through the editorials that he constantly wrote.

### A LIFE-LONG PEOPLES' ADVOCATE

Tilak was trained to be a lawyer. In the beginning he became a teacher, then started Kesari and though not practising as a lawyer in the court, he took pleadership of the people through Kesari for all his life. This pleadership, voluntarily accepted, would not earn him money. On the other hand it would throw him in



prison. But this lawyer who cared for the values of the basic rights of the people and their welfare, fought fearlessly against the mighty British empire using all his knowledge of law, his sharp rational power, his scholarship. The British government was the accused and the Indian people his clients. Lokmanya Tilak's constant charge against the British Government was oppression of the Indian people, looting them, breaking the promises given to them, denying them freedom, thinking about nothing else but the expansion of their own empire, refusing every opportunity to the natives and doing injustice to them in every way they could. To prove these charges Tilak presented in his editorials all the necessary evidence, statistics and tables. He presents his case firmly giving all the former instances of the particular context. He quotes from the Puranas, history, Vedas, Upanishads, uses maxims and sayings so that his thoughts can reach the people. He marks the weak points and the precise weakness of the enemy-party and attacks them, praises what is proper and good, but slashes and breaks whatever is bad. He knows well the strong points of the accused which he conveys to the readers though it is not necessary for him to give up his own point.

### LAWYER ONLY FOR THE TRUTH

Tilak is a pleader of the truth and pleads only for the truth. This lawyer had intense faith in justice and hates injustice equally intensely. He spreads what his mind and intellect felt was the truth and paid little heed when his relatives, his friends, people belonging to his own religion and party became his opponents. Hence he had to fight his own people along with the British government.

Tilak was known as Lokmanya. He has great faith in the power of the people. He has dedicated his "Geeta Rahasya" to Lord Krishna-the soul of the people. He believed that people should take the ultimate decision. He thought that the people should solve the debates over grammar or even the alphabet. The term people includes all from oil man, betel-leaf workers to high class persons. The Kesari editorials are meant as much for the government as for all the people. Warning the government through the incidence repeatedly taking place and praying to awaken the

people Tilak has carried on his mission. The suggestion made through the shloka at the head of Kesari, viz., `Indian people are like the lion asleep in a cave in the mountain, if they wake up they can destroy the elephant of British rule', is implied in every editorial. This shloka echoes in almost all the editorials.

## AN IDEAL EDUCATOR OF PEOPLE

While studying Lokmanya Tilak's Kesari editorials, one often realises that by starting and establishing a genuine literary form through his newspaper editorials, he has made an invaluable contribution to Marathi literature. He has laid down a model of how to do this type of writing that has the power to inspire. These editorials have done the difficult job of creating an encyclopaedia of the early act of the freedom movement.

Newspaper writing is incidental, generally written in a superficial manner and hence is forgotten. But this writing of Lokmanya has become ever-lasting because of his original thinking, the continuing philosophical base of the writer of Geeta Rahasya and the constant, unbroken motive of the enlightenment of the nation. Jayantrao Tilak has called these editorials " the power of the penance of a learned ascetic with the purpose of the upliftment of the country" and readers feel it when they study the editorials.

`The Kesari writer Lokmanya Tilak' is really the sum of rich qualities of his editor's unquestioned power, his sharp intellect, brilliance, fearlessness, love of truth, selflessness, severe sense of justice, visionariness, idealistic practicalism and self-sacrificing attitude. G.T. Madkholkar in his book `My teacher in the field of writing' has said, " Tilak's personality, his leadership and his editorship were inseparable and identical."

It is necessary, hence, to bear in mind the peculiarities of his personality and his leadership while considering Tilak's policies or style as an editor. Tilak himself was a superman and so was his Kesari! Hence `Kesari' could create an untiring, strong desire in Maharashtra to fight for the nation's freedom. Editor Tilak was the literary image of the national leader Tilak. The sight of this image and pondering over it will undoubtedly always be full of inspiration for the newspaper business.



"A newspaper's pen always writing on different topics serves the same purpose as street lamps and a policeman's rounds serve". The light of his editorial thoughts was continuously thrown on the merits as well as faults of the British rule and officials. Lokmanya Tilak has tried to awaken the hidden power of the Indian people and in a way challenged the British rule intoxicated as it was. Lokmanya has proved to be the father of Indian unrest. The shloka by Jaggannath Pandit at the head of Kesari is very important from this point of view. "Of my friend, Lord of the heard of elephants, with eyes blinded by intoxication, do not for a moment stay here in this thick forest land, for, here in the mountain cave sleeps the lion who shakes huge rocks with his terrible claws mistaking them for elephants." This `Anyokti' (surface meaning applicable to something else) in the shloka of Jaggannath Pandit has taken shape in Lokmanya's editorials.

From the above discussion we can be sure that Lokmanya was real teacher in his own peculiar style. He is therefore known as `The father of Indian unrest' in its true sense.

# 12

# Lokmanya Tilak an Eminent Indologist

It is not much known that Tilak was also a great scholar and his researches in Indology were widely recognised by his contemporaries in world.

Lokamanya Tilak's main contribution to Indology consists of three principle works viz. (1) The Orion or Researches into the Antiquity of the Vedas, (2) The Arctic Home in the Vedas, and (3) The Gita Rahasya whereas (4) Vedic Chronology and the Vendanga Jyotish contains his research papers on some topics in Indology. Mention should also be made of his editorials on the Mahabharata which-testify to his versatile genius.

**The Orion**

Tilak had realised that western scholars were not prepared to accept a high antiquity for the Vedic literature-Max Mueller in particular had assigned the Rigveda to about 1200 B.C. He had divided the entire vedic literature into four strata viz. the Chhandas, Mantra, Brahmana and Sutra. These were placed in the chronological order in which the Chhandas were the earliest to be composed and the Sutra literature was the last, and all this was complete before the rise of Buddhism about 400 B.C. Max Mueller allowed some two centuries for each stage, and thus arrived at 1200 B.C. as the date of the Rigveda. The same method was followed by one Dr. Hang who assigned five hundred years for each of the four stages and placed the Rigveda in 2400 B.C. According to him the Vedic literature developed during 2400-2000 B.C. All this dating by Max Mueller and others was done



on the basis of literary evidence, particularly the style which, however, could reveal only the relative chronological position and no evidence was adduced in support of a calendrical date. Tilak was justified in arguing that this method was rather vague and uncertain and could at best be cited as supportive evidence. The entire gamut of Vedic literature was thus hanging in a sort of chronological vaccum.

Tilak was deeply interested in Sanskrit literature, particularly Vedic, as also mathematics. It was at this time precisely that Shankar Balakrishna Dikshit published his Bharatiya Jyotish Shastracha Itihas in Marathi (History of Indian Astronomy) which is a shining example of Indian scholarship. It demonstrated to the world how the Indians had made remarkable progress in astronomy in ancient times. When Tilak came across a reference in the Bhagwad-Gita that Krishna was `the Margasirsa of the months, (Masanam Margasirsoham) it immediately struck him like a flash that astronomy may offer some clue to the dating of the Vedas and he therefore collected the astronomical references occurring in the Vedic literature. To his great surprise he was proved right and he could therefore develop his chronology of the Vedic literature. He had given two lectures on it in Pune in 1891 and later prepared his paper for the 9th Oriental Congress which was to be held in London in 1892, but it became such a longish essay that it was later in 1893 published in the form of a separate monograph and only a short summary was included in the Proceedings of the Congress. All this was done when he was fully involved in all sorts of political and social controversies. The idea first occurred to him in 1890 as he states in the Preface to the `Orion' and it took four years to complete.

**TILAK'S THEORY IS BASED ESSENTIALLY ON THE ASTRONOMICAL EVIDENCE**

He states, "We find that the Rigveda hymns had already become antiquated and unintelligible in the days of the Taittiriya Samhita and the Brahmanas. The Taittiriya Samhita places the vernal equinox in the Krittikas, and I have shown that we must fix its date at about 2500 B.C. If the hymns of the Rigveda were unintelligible at this time, they must have been sung several centuries before it."

The expression "I am Margasirsa among months" attracted Tilak's attention because he saw in it some clue to the Vedic chronology for the simple reason that the names of months in the Hindu calendar are derived from the names of nakshatras. Presently our new year starts from Chaitra, but as Whitney has shown, it began in Margasirsa according to the Surya Siddhanta. Sacrifice (yajna) is the base of the Vedic culture, and is closer, related to the Sun.

Hence, for the performance of sacrifice a good knowledge of months, seasons and sun's movements was essential. Everyday the Nakshatra close to the sun was noted, and the time it took to come to the same position was counted as one year. The beginning of the year was the commencement of the sacrifice and it (Satra) continued for tile whole year. According to the Vedanga-Jyotisha, new year starts from winter. This is known as the vernal equinox (Uttaryana), which means the sun's movement from the south to the north. It has been observed that the seasons lag behind by one month after every two thousand years, and this change has to be adjusted in the calendar. This can be proved by the statement that "the sun is in the asterism of Krittikas," which occurs in the Taittiriya Samhita.

The equinoxes are the two days of the year when the Sun is directly above the equator. As the earth moves in its orbit around the sun, the position of the sun changes in relation to the equator. The sun appears north of the equator between the March equinox and the September equinox. It Is south of the equator between the September equinox and the next March equinox.

This happened in 2350 B.C. With this as a fixed datum, the various stages of the Vedic literature have been dated by Tilak. According to him, the oldest Vedic calendar, the oldest Vedic hymn, was sacrificial, and therefore the sacrifice of the year commenced with Aditi at the vernal equinox in or near Punarvasu. The tradition about the old beginnings of the year is mentioned in the Taittiriya Samhita, and the same is corroborated by the oldest traditions and records of the Parsis and the Greeks who also belonged to the Aryan race. On the basis of the evidence furnished by astronomical references in the Taittiriya Sanhita Tilak developed his chronology for the Vedic literature as follows.



**The Oldest Period**

The oldest period in the Aryan civilization which may be called Aditi or the Pre-Orion period which, according to Tilak, can be provided 6000-4000 BC time bracket. He observes that the Parsis and the Greeks who, though belonging to the Aryan race, have not retained the tradition of this period because "they carried with them the calendar which was in force when they left the common home, while the Indian Aryans have preserved all the traditions with a super religious fidelity and scrupulousness."

**The Orion Period (4000-2500 B.C.)**

This period starts from the time when the vernal equinox was in the asterism of Ardra (Orion) and continues upto the time when it receded to the asterism of the Krittikas. This, according to Tilak, was the most important period in the development of the Aryan civilization. It was pre-eminently the period of the hymns which contain a record of the beginning of the year when several legends were conceived. (e.g. the legend of Vrisakapi).

**The Krittika Period (2500-1400 B.C.)**

This period begins when the vernal equinox was in the asterism of the Krittikas and continues upto the period recorded in the Vedanga Jyotish. It was the period of the Taittiriya Samhita and many of the Brahmanas were composed during this period. According to Tilak, "The hymns of the Rigveda had already become unique and unintelligible by this time and the Brahmavadins engaged in speculations about the real meaning of these hymns and legends."

**Pre-Buddhist period (1400-500 B.C.)**

This was the period when the Sutra literature was composed.

Tilak concludes his theory with the following statement,

*"The astronomical method, I admit, is vague in so far as it does not enable us to determine the exact date of all the Vedic hymns or works, but it is certainly superior to linguistic method inasmuch as it supplies us with certain definite, undisputed facts, for instance, the position of the equinoxes, which can safely be made the nuclei of the different periods of antiquity.''*

He further adds "thus we find that of all the ancient nations the Hindus alone had well nigh accurately determined the rate of the motion of the procession of the equinoxes."

Tilak records his debt to the Late Professor R. G. Bhandarkar, his teacher at Deccan College, Pune, for explaining to him the views of certain German scholars and Khan Bahadur Dr. Dastur Hoshang Jamasp for Parsee traditions.

In the Orion Tilak has given quite a new and convincing interpretation of some eighty verses in the Rigveda besides shedding a welcome light on many more. These verses had baffled the students of Vedic literature for long even from the time of Sayanacharya. His theory of `cosmic circulation of aerial waters' properly explained the Indra-Vrtra myth.

Tilak's dating of the Vedas to such an early period in the fourth millennium was not acceptable to a majority of western scholars, as for instance, Max Mueller who was not prepared to go beyond the second millennium B.C. although he had at one stage concluded that it is impossible to determine the date of the Vedic literature and that it may be four thousand or five thousand year old. But there were quite a few who agreed with Tilak. Professor Hermann Jacobi had simultaneously, but independently, arrived at the conclusion that the antiquity of the Vedas can go back to 6000 B.C.9 Dr. Bloomfield, an eminent American scholar, was sceptical at first but, as he read through, he was inclined to agree with Tilak's views. He confessed that he was convinced in all essential points and that the book was unquestionably the literary sensation of the year.

It will be interesting to examine Tilak's theory in the light of recent archaeological research. Hundred years have passed since Tilak expounded his views. In his time the Indus civilization had not been discovered; but now we know it in all its glory. It must be stated that there are quite a few who identify it as the civilization of the Vedic Aryans although the general opinion seems to assign it to a post-Harappan date in the later half of the second millennium B.C. It may not be out of place to mention here that the recent archaeological data have not yielded any evidence for the Aryan invasion. Moreover, the beginning of the settled life in the Indian subcontinent now goes back to almost ten thousand years as is clear from the excavation at Mehragh which is located at the mouth of the Bolan Pass near Quetta in Pakistan. The excavated evidence points to continuous habitation starting from 7500 B.C. and ending around 3000 B.C. which marks the Early Harappan phase out of which evolved the Indus or the Harappan civilization. The only noticeable culture change in all the four and a half millennia of continuous habitation is between 6000 B.C. to 4500 B. C. which indicates the arrival of a new group of people or new cultural influences. These are precisely the dates that Tilak has assigned to his Pre-Orion period. This may be sheer coincidence and it will not be prudent to read too much into it at this stage, but at the same time it cannot be dismissed out of hand.



**The Arctic Home**

Tilak's other work is `The Arctic Home' in the Vedas. While writing The Orion, he came across certain statements in the Vedic literature which led him to ponder over the problem of the original habitat of the Aryans.

However, he could not find the leisure required for such a serious study in the political and social conflicts in which he was engaged at that time. But when he was imprisoned for sedition in 1898 he could devote his attention to this problem. It was at this time that Max Mueller, the greatest Vedicist had sent him a copy of the second edition of the Rigveda edited by him. It is interesting to note that Max Mueller had developed great respect for Tilak's scholarship although he did not agree with his theories. Actually the Oxford Professor pleaded for leniency for Tilak when he was imprisoned. He put his signature to a petition which urged consideration in respect of Tilak. He wrote,

"My interest in Tilak is certainly that of a Sanskrit scholar for though I do not agree with argument put forward in his `Orion' or `Researches into the Antiquity of the Vedas' (Bombay 1883), I cannot help feeling sorry that he should lose the benefit of his labours. I sent him the edition of my Rigveda, but I am told that he is not allowed to read even his Bible and Prayer-book in prison."

Tilak conceded that he was released in twelve months because of the efforts of Max Mueller and others.

Titak was deeply interested in the edition of the Rigveda which he received from Max Mueller. He was highly impressed by the statement `suryodayat prak bahuni ahani asan' meaning `many days have passed before the sunrise'. It was this statement that led him to trace the original home of the Aryans in the Arctic region.14 He wrote this book when he was involved in the Jagannath Maharaj adoption case. In the Orion, he had shown, on astronomical grounds, that the antiquity of the Vedas can be stretched back to 4500 B.C. Tilak says in the Preface to the Arctic Home, that it is a sequel to the Orion in which it was unmistakably pointed out that the vernal equinox was in the constellation of Mriga or Orion during the period when the Vedic hymns were composed, and that it had receded to the constellation of the Krittikas or the Pleiades (about 2500 B.C.) in the days of the Brahmanas. The next logical step was to trace the original home of the Aryans.

Tilak began to ponder over the problem and was immersed in thinking about references to the sun, day, night, dawn and so on. He was very happy when he found the statement that many days have passed before the sunrise for it implied a very long day and a very long night. This phenomenon occurs only in the Polar region and the logical conclusion therefore was that the original home of the Aryans was in the area of North Pole. Although the climate in that region is extreme cold, a few studies had appeared in the latter half of the last century according to which it was mild in the Inter-glacial period when human habitation there was possible.

This was established geologically and several scholars had therefore argued that the original home of the early man must be sought in the arctic region where the plant and animal life also originated. In fact one Dr. Warren of Boston University wrote a book entitled Paradise Found or the Cradle of the Human Race at the North Pole. Tilak very meticulously employed all scientific evidence very judiciously and developed his theory of the Arctic home of the Vedic Aryans, He argued as below.

1. According to the latest geological evidence, which cannot be lightly set aside, the last glacial period must have closed and the Post-Glacial commenced at about 10,000 years ago, or 8000 B.C. at the best, and the freshness of the Siberian fossil deposits favours this view.
2. There were at least two Glacial and one Inter-Glacial period, and the geographical distribution of land and water on the earth during the Inter Glacial period was quite different from what it is at present.
3. There were great vicissitudes of climate in the Pleistocene period, it being cold and inclement during the Glacial, and mild and temperate ill the Inter-Glacial period, even as far as the Polar regions.
4. There is enough evidence to show that the Arctic regions, both in Asia and Europe, were characterised in the Inter-Glacial period by cool summers and warm winters-a sort of what Herschel calls, a perpetual spring; and that places like Spitzbergen, where the sun goes below the horizon from November till March, were once the seat of luxuriant vegetation that grows at present, only in the temperate or the tropical climate.



It has been recently suggested that Tilak's view was influenced by the writings of Reuben Burrow who wrote on Hindu myths in 1789.16 He was of the opinion that the equator lay further to the north and that temperate climate once prevailed in Siberia. Polar regions had six months' light and six months' darkness and the sun shines in the North Pole continuously for six months. Tilak quotes Dr. Warren who in turn quoted Captain Pim,

"On the 16th March the sun rises, preceded by a long dawn of forty seven days, namely, from the 29th January, when the first glimmer of light appears. On the 25th of September the sun sets, and after a twilight of forty eight days, namely on the 13th November, darkness reigns supreme. so far as the sun is concerned, for seventy six days followed by one long period of light, the sun remaining above the horizon one hundred and ninety four days. The year therefore is thus divided at the Pole as 194 days sun; 76 darkness, 47 days dawn, 48 twilight."

The characteristics of the Polar region which, as listed by Tilak, are as follows.

1. The sun rises in the south.

2. The stars do not rise and set, but revolve, or spin round, in horizontal planes completing one round in 24 hours. The northern celestial hemisphere is alone overhead and visible during the whole year; and the southern or the lower celestial world is always invisible.
3. The year consists of only one long day and one long night of six months each.
4. There is only one morning and one evening, or the sun rises and sets only once a year.

These phenomena are so peculiar to the North Pole that one may expect their traces in the traditions and myths of the people who once lived there. The idea of the day and night of the gods, each being of six months' duration, is reflected in the Puranas as also in astronomical works. Mount Meru is the terrestrial North Pole of our astronomers.

The Surya Siddhanta (XII, 67) clearly states, "At Mount Meru gods behold the sun after but a single rising during the half of his revolution beginning with Aries.19" According to Tilak, "The day of the Gods corresponds with the passage of the sun from the vernal to the autumnal equinox, when the sun is visible at the North Pole, or the Meru and the night with the Southern passage of the sun, from the automnal back to the vernal equinox." He is therefore justified in observing that "If the ancestors of the Vedic bards ever lived near the North Pole, the cosmical or meteorological conditions of the place could not have failed to influence the mythology of these people; and if our theory is true, a careful examination of Vedic myths ought to disclose facts which cannot be accounted for by any other theory."

In the 19th century much of the evidence in respect of the Aryan problem was of linguistic nature, and it was on the basis of comparative philology that theories about the antiquity of the Vedas and the original homeland of the Aryans were developed. Tilak's researches brought in a whiff of fresh air in this otherwise stale atmosphere for he employed astronomical references in the Vedas for dating them whereas in the Arctic Home, he marshalled evidence not only of comparative philology but also of geology, archaeology, ethnography and so on.



This in a way is a good illustration of multi-disciplinary approach which is very much in vogue at present. There were a few scholars who agreed with Tilak. Amongst these the foremost was one Dr. F. W. Warren, the then President of the University of Boston in USA, who was impressed by the array of evidence marshalled by Tilak and hence his judgement was far more conclusive than any other put forth by any Indo-Aryan scholar.22

Tilak is known more for his Gita-Rahasya than his other scholarly works. He was once asked by his father, who was on his deathbed, to read the Gita to him. He was then a young lad of sixteen in 1872, but even at tender age was thinking as to what was really the message of the Gita23. He was pondering over it and was very much interested in writing on it but could not do so because of his multifarious activities-social and political, and had therefore to postpone it every time.

Finally, when he was imprisoned in 1908 in Mandalay, he requested the government to permit him to take some books with him. It was granted and he has noted in the Preface to the Gita Rahasya that in the winter of 1910-11, he wrote out the first draft, made improvements as and when possible, but since he had not with him the required reference books, he finally completed the work during his sojourn at Sinhagad near Pune.

Even then he felt that it was not as thorough and complete in all respects as he desired. He was dictating it to his assistant, some 10-12 pages a day, and the latter wrote in long hand as it was in Marathi. He wrote it in four months and published it in June 1915.

Among the ancient commentaries on the Gita, only that by Shankaracharya is available, and it is highly likely that there were others also. It is well known that the Prasthana-trayi consisting of the Upanisads the Brahma-Sutras and the Gita-constitutes the foundation of the philosophy of Hinduism.

Sankaracharya advocated advaita, and preached that only sanyasa leads to the final salvation (moksa). Tilak, on the other hand argues that the Gita teaches us to do our duty in whatever station of life we are. The message of the Gita is thus Karma-yoga. On the battle field, at the very commencement of the Mahabharata

war, Arjuna was perplexed that the enemy were his own kith and kin, and was in two minds whether he should fight or not. Hence Krishna, who was also his charioteer, had to impress upon him that he should do his duty, that is to fight. What the Lord emphasizes is that one should do his ordained duty and while performing it, one should not expect any fruit. This is the niskam-karma-yoga of the Gita. In the Gita Tilak found that the cult of sacrifice was replaced by that of Bhakti, and that it gave the message of karma-yoga and not that of sanyasa as propounded by Sankaracharya.

The Gita Rahasya received numerous accolades from different quarters but the most telling was the praise showered by Sri Aurobindo who found the work "an original criticism and presentation of ethical monumental work, the first prose writing of the front rank in importance... and is likely to become a classic."

Tilak wrote the Gita-Rahasya in Marathi, and when his friends asked him why did he not write in English, he replied that it is not a piece of research, but was written for the common man who should imbibe the karma-yoga as interpreted by him.

Moreover, he said that the people in the western world are already practicing karma-yoga and that is why they have prospered; hence they need not be taught it. When the book was first published in 1915, the first edition of six thousand copies was sold like hot cakes, and there were queues outside the Kesari office in Gaikwad Wada.

Although a vast majority of the people agreed with Tilak's interpretation of the Gita, there were some, particularly in Pune, who criticized it out of sheer jealousy. Some opposed Tilak's views because they were contradictory to those of Shankaracharya. Be that as it may, the book was immensely popular as the printing history shows, and was also translated into English and many Indian languages.

Besides these major research works, Lokmanya Tilak also wrote a few research papers. The most interesting amongst these is `The Chaldean and Indian Vedas', which was originally a lecture that he delivered at the Cama Oriental Research Institute in Bombay on 6th December 1904, and was later contributed to the R. G.



Bhandarkar Commemoration Volume. Interesting archaeological discoveries were being made in West Asia at the beginning of the twentieth century noteworthy among which were the inscribed tablets unearthed in large numbers in Mesopotamia which, on decipherment, were found to record what scholars have aptly refereed to as the Chaldean Veda.

Tilak had come across certain nonsanskrit works in course of his study of the Atharva Veda. Since, according to him, the Vedic and the Chaldean civilization were contemporary, there must have been culture contact between them. He showed how the word `mana' was borrowed by the Vedic. Much more interesting and ingenious, however, is the similarity in Taimata and Urugula of the Av with Tiamat and Urgala of the Accadian legends. Tilak has discussed some other words which throw light on the contacts between India and West Asia in the ancient past.

Yet another paper deals with `A missing verse in the Sankhya Karikas'. The Sankhya Karika of Ishwarkrishna contained 70 verses, but only 69 are available. Tilak reconstructed the missing verse on the basis of the evidence of the commentary of Gaudapada27. There are some more papers which have been published in a book entitled Vedic Chronology and Vedanga Jyotish.

Tilak wrote a series of eight articles in the Kesari on the Mahabharata, which, though reviewed C. V. Vaidya's monumental work on the epic, are also important for his deep insight into the subject. Vaidya had dated the Mahabharat war to about 300 B.C., but Tilak has very convincingly shown that the event in all probability occurred around 1400 B.C. which date is in agreement with that proposed by a majority of scholars. Many of Tilak's editorials display his wide erudition and keen intellect. He wrote on a variety of subjects such as Ramayan, Bababhatta, Vishnu-sahasranama, Agnosticism and so on which bear eloquent testimony to his versatile genius.

All of Tilak's writings are marked by a remarkable clarity of style, forceful language _ whether English or Marathi _ and elegant prose. They also display his wide erudition which is at once interesting and instructive and is free from cumbersome jargon. This is obviously due to his being basically a teacher of Sanskrit and Mathematics. He was gifted with an imagination of a very

high order and his genius was comprehensive and subtle. The sheer speed with which he wrote is simply amazing. He dictated almost a dozen pages at a stretch and worked for over sixteen hours a day.

This could be possible because of his super-abundant energy and robust health which he has acquired during his student days. He was a true practitioner of the Karmayoga which, according to him, was the gospel of the Gita. The great Indian philosopher, S. Radhakrishnan wrote that "his (Tilak's) real genius lay in literacy work." His essay on `A missing verse in the Sankhya Karika' is regarded by scholars as a notable contribution to the interpretation of the Sankhya Philosophy. His Orion started the western world. Mahatma Gandhi was highly impressed by his encyclopaedic learning which he carried lightly. Had he been able to devote all his energies to study and research, he would have certainly solved many riddles of Hinduism. He was a great Indologist.

# 13

# Lokmanya Tilak and Maratha History

The Marathas who had established their direct or indirect control over a major part of this sub-continent in the 18th century, were the last rulers of India from whom the British wrested power, as James Grant Duff, the first comprehensive historian of the Marathas, has frankly admitted in his book published in 1826.

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Father of Indian Unrest, belonged to the generation of the 19th century Maharashtra, who had not yet forgotten that they were the rulers of this country in the immediate past. As a patriot of the highest order, he dedicated his entire life for the liberation of India from the clutches of the colonial rule of the British over his motherland. He must have thought of history, as the most suitable and effective method to mobilize public opinion against the tyrannical rule of the British. He thought that the career of Shivaji, who was not yet forgotten by the people, would be the best tool which could be used to attract masses towards the freedom struggle. This led him to indulge in deep research about the Marathas, particularly of Shivaji.

## TILAK'S EQUIPMENT AS HISTORIAN

Tilak was not a professional historian. He entered into the field of historical research by sheer accident.

The initial success in the research of the antiquity of the Vedas, encouraged him to do further research and as a sequel to his Orion or Researches into the Antiquity of the Vedas, Tilak produced another original research book, `The Arctic Home' in the Vedas' in 1898, during the period of his eighteen months imprisonment at Yervada in 1897-98. The book was, however,

published in 1903, because of his busy schedule after his release from imprisonment. The main theme of his research was-where was the earliest home of the Vedas? With a view to resolve this issue he studied geological researches about the commencement of the post-glacial period, the historic evidence from the Vedic and the allied literature, the characteristics of the polar region, and produced a book entitled `The Arctic Home in the Vedas' having 13 chapters running into 450 pages. He presented a mass of evidence to prove conclusively that before the commencement of the post-glacial epoch, the North Pole regions were inhabited by the Aryan race, and that those people migrated from this place southwards in Asia and Europe not by any `irrestible impulse' but by unwelcome changes in the climatic conditions of their original home.

**PLUNGE IN MARATHA HISTORY**

However, the peculiar circumstances that were prevailing in the last decades of the 19th century, made him set aside his prime interest in the researches of Ancient India, and plunge into the history of the immediate past of Maharahstra i.e. the Maratha History.

The intellectuals of Maharashtra had started taking interest in their history. Neelakantha Janardhan Kirtane, a junior student of the Deccan College, assailed Grant Duff's History of the Marathas (1826) in his lecture delivered in the Young Men's Association of the College in 1868. He rhetorically pointed out that Grant's History was no more than an account of the military expeditions of the Marathas, rather than the glorious achievements of the Maratha people, of which the people of this region were proud. Rajwade V.K. another historian of the Marathas, after enlisting many deficiencies and mistakes in Grant's History confirmed the assessment of Kirtane and said further that his history was not more than a chronicle. Grant's history was also translated into Marathi by Captain David and Baba Sane and published in 1829-30. Text books on History were prepared on the basis of information contained in these histories which presented a distorted picture of the Maratha Rule with a view to justify their conquest of the country. It was, therefore, necessary to remove the prejudices



developed by the non-Marathi speaking people, through reading the historical writings of the British to whom the Marathas were simply plunderers who thrived on looting other Indian powers.

The British rulers, who strove to inculcate the feeling of distrust among the Indians, and prevent the revival of Maratha power, put restrictions on the researches in the Maratha period, which was a hot bed according to them. This restrictive policy of the British denying free access to the archival material preserved in the Government Archives, induced a group of Marathi scholars to launch a popular movement for collecting historical material from the historically old families of the Marathas in the last quarter of the 19th century. Individual historians like Kashinath Narayan Sane (1851-1927) Vasudev Shastri Khare (1858-1924), Vinayak Kashinath Rajwade (1864-1926) and Dattatraya Balwant Parasnis (1870-1926) dug out private archives of Maratha princes, jagirdars, sardars, ministers, and others to counteract the restrictive policy of the colonial rule and present an authentic and real picture of the Maratha power, and remove thereby the misgivings created by the historical writing of the British. Rajwade V.K., for instance founded the Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal at Pune in 1910 on the model of the German historian Leopold Von Ranke (1795-1886), with a view to collect, preserve, and publishing authentic source material and promote scientific research in Indian history. The latter half of the 19th century witnessed a flood of historical writings including various forms of literature like novels, plays, poetry, epics, miscellaneous writings, besides the publication of source material. Thus, the period from Gopal Hari Deshmukh, (Popularly known as Lokhitwadi) (1823-1892) to Lokmanya B.G. Tilak (1856-1920) produced many historical writings, which helped to awaken the interests of masses in their past history.

**IMMEDIATE CAUSE**

However the immediate cause which aroused much interest in Shivaji among the intellectuals, elites and masses of Maharashtra was the references to the dilapidated condition of Shivaji's tomb at Raigad, made by a British visitor James Douglas in his work entitled `A book of Bombay', first published in 1883 and reproduced in his bigger book `Bombay and Western Indian' published from

London in 1893. Douglas visited the Raigad fort in 1883 and when he found the cenotaph (Samadhi) of Shivaji in a dilapidated condition, the temple in a wretched plight, and the image therein thrown on the ground, pathetically observed, "Nobody now cares for Shivaji, not one rupee is spent on the annual repairs of the tomb of Shivaji Maharaj who was master of an enormous kingdom."

Douglas further urged the British Government, who had acquired the Kingdom of Shivaji and his successors to look into this matter, in a note in which he said, "The British Government conserves the architectural remains of Tudor and Stuarts. Will not the Bombay Government do as much for the tomb, the temple and the arch of Shivaji? A few crumbs that fall from the archaeological bureau of Western India would suffice to keep in repair memorials of a dashing and most romantic period."

The efforts of James Douglas, however, did not go in vain. In view of these remarks, and the pressure from the public, the British Government, not only declared it as a Monument of Protection but also made some provision for its repairs and maintenance.

The remarks of James Douglas about the neglect of the forts in general and Raigad in particular also created a stir in Maharashtra and both the press and the intellectuals resented the Government policy strongly. Raigad was made the symbol of patriotism, and people were reminded by the Press, as early as 1885, of their negligence of patriotism. Justice M.G. Ranade, the author of the famous classic `Rise of the Maratha Power' organised a public meeting at Hirabag in Pune in 1886 to promote interest in the issue of Shivaji Memorial. It was attended by many important people including the Maratha Sardars, Landlords and even the representative of the Kolhapur State.

## LOKMANYA AND THE SHIVAJI MEMORIAL MOVEMENT

Lokmanya Tilak being otherwise busy with several other issues including his own research in Vedic literature, perhaps, did not actively participate in the Shivaji Memorial issue. But an article in the Native opinion of V.N. Mandlik (1895) in which the author after personally visiting the Raigad fort concurred with James Douglas's views which were reproduced again in his book Bombay



and Western India in 1893 about the deplorable condition of the shrine of Maharaja Shivaji at Raigad. This kindled the imagination of Tilak and in his article in the Kesari of April 23, 1895 he condemned himself and the sardars and jagirdars for letting the samadhi to fall into decay. He wrote sarcastically, but the sardars and the chiefs knew that they are not likely to be benefited by Shivaji as he is dead and gone. This exhortation had its desired effect in attracting people from all strata of society and raising the funds for repairs, maintenance, a chhatri on the tomb, and annual birthday celebration. He made this a issue of national interest and gave to it the shape of a movement which was later on known as the Shivaji Movement which spread in the other parts of the country like Bengal, United Provinces, Assam and some places in the South as a political movement and a part of the India's struggle for freedom.

Tilak organised a public meeting on 30th May 1895 at Hirabag, Pune on the same lines as Justice Ranade had done in 1886. A Smarak Committee of 50 members including Tilak was appointed in this meeting to raise substantial funds for the Shivaji Memorial to give a fitting reply to the Bombay Government which had sanctioned a ridiculous grant of Rs. five per annum for the repairs and maintenance of the tomb of the Maratha Chhatrapati. This appeal touched the public and donations started pouring into the Memorial Fund from two annas of a student to one thousand of Maharaj Sayajirao Gaikwad of Baroda, and within a period of six months an amount to the tune of Rs. Nine thousand was collected.

In view of this unexpected response from the public it was decided that henceforth the birthday of Shivaji be celebrated on the Raigad fort itself, instead of the earlier practice of organising it at Mahad. The Committee also framed provisional rules to regulate celebrations to be held at Raigad from 1896 on a large scale, and published them in the Kesari (3rd March 1896).

Tilak had also planned to direct the attention of the National leaders and make the birthday celebrations of Shivaji, a national festival. He organised a meeting on 29th December 1895 at the Reay Market (now known as Phule Market) which was addressed by national leaders like Surendra Nath Banerjee, President of the Indian National Congress, and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya.

Tilak had decided to hold the Birthday celebrations at Raigad with a double purpose, firstly to take the people to the fort and let them see for themselves the dilapidated position of the Shivaji Memorial and make them contribute generously to the Fund; and secondly, to declare that what government could not do, the people of Maharashtra will do i.e. the repairs and maintenance by raising funds.

Several objections were raised by the Government while granting permission to hold the function at Raigad. The proposal was rejected first on the ground that Raigad was a reserved forest area, and secondly by objecting to the Marathi term Yatra used in the letter of the organizers which was translated into English by the Oriental Translator to the Government as Fair, which was considered equivalent in English to Market and as per the provisions of the Markets and Fairs Act of 1862 for want of sufficient notice, the request of the organisers was turned down. The organisers substituted the word `Yatra' by `Utsava' and approached the Government again.

Tilak was an elected member of the Legislative Council of the Bombay Government since 1893. He arranged a personal interview with the Governor of Bombay who was holidaying in Mahabaleshwar in April 1896 and obtained the necessary permission from the Governor by promising him that no untoward incidents would take place during the course of the festival. Thus, with the explicit permission of the Government, the celebrations were held on 15th April 1896, as declared, and the National Festival of Shivajayanti was inaugurated with great pomp and splendour. The Kesari of 21st April 1896 reported that over 6000 persons from various places of Maharashtra had gathered on the fort to witness the festival and pay their humble homage to their great national hero. The press in general reported it as `the most glorious and successful function that was ever held at the Raigad fort.' Probably since the coronation of Shivaji which was held over 250 years ago, there had been no function similar to the one held this year.

The Government, however, was not prepared to express any opinion in favour or otherwise on this movement officially called `the Shivaji boom'. To Mr. Nugent, a member of the Council of



Governor, `the entire agitation is purely a Brahmin move. The Marathas have held aloof' (25-7-1897).

The initial success in celebrating the birthday of Shivaji, involved him in direct research in Maratha history, particularly regarding fixing the correct date and place of Shivaji's birth. As regards, the place of birth of Shivaji, all historians unanimously accepted the fort of Shivaneri as the place where Shivaji was born; but opinion was divided about the year and date of his birth-whether it was Vaishakha of Shaka 1549 (1627 AD) or Falgun of Shaka 1551 (1630 AD).

V. K. Rajwade, the doyen among the Maratha historians, in his introduction to the Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane vol. IV published in 1900 discusses the issue of Shivaji's birthdate and on the basis of a chronological note submitted by one Kashinath Krishna Lele of Dhar (Dewas) in 1801 for publication in Kavyeitihas Samgraha periodical of K.N. Sane. This chronology of Dhar mentions that Shivaji was born on Monday, the Vaishakha Shudha Panchami of the Prabhav Samvatsar and the nakshatra (constellation) was Rohini. According to the English calender the birthday falls on 10th April 1627. Grant Duff denies it and says that Shivaji was born in the month May of the Year 1627 which is obviously not correct. He examined the bakhars (chronicles) saptaprakarnatmak Charitra of Shivaji by Malhar Ramrao Chitnis and Shivadigvijya (found in Baroda in 1818, written by an unknown author) suggesting Shaka 1549 Vaishakha Shudha Dwitiya, Thursday as the birthday of Shivaji, and rejected it on the ground that the Rohini nakshatra does not occur on Thursday. Rajwade doubts the motives of the chroniclers in advocating Vaishaka Dwitiya (7 April 1627) instead of Panchami. It was believed in those days that the king must be born on an auspicious day, and as Panchami did not fulfil that, they must have rejected it and conveniently fixed the birthdate on Dwitiya.

Tilak who was anxious to determine the exact birth date of Shivaji, was dragged into this birthday controversy by the above mentioned Introduction of Rajwade. He elaborately examined this issue in his article in the Kesari of 24th April 1900. He read Rajwade's 140 pages long introduction, it seems and appreciated his efforts of collecting all available information and examining

it scientifically and carefully and arriving at some conclusions after examining the contradictory views of scholars. He also hoped that Rajwade would continue his research and examine the controversial or doubtful issues and enlighten his readers by supplying proper information.

Tilak was amazed to see that there was lack of consistency in the chronicles and historical documents about the birth date of a person who was born some 275 years ago, and that five to six versions about his birth date differing in the shaka (year) or, samvatsar (era) or tithi (date). On the basis of information that was available for him he could only surmise that most of the sources agree only on the month of birth, i.e. vaishakha but not with the date and other details, and therefore, he says, one can arrive at a proper decision only after critically examining all the issues involved in it.

Tilak critically examined nearly fourteen sources of information, contemporary and of little later period produced between 17th and early 19th century. They included poetic works like Shivaraj Bhushan or Shiva-Bhavani of a contemporary Hindi poet Bhushan of the North India, Shivakaya by Purushottam, bakhars like Sabhasadi, Citnisi, Chitragupta, Rairi, Shivadgvijaya, Shivapratap, Marathi Samrajyachi Choti Bakhar, 91 Qalimi bakhar, Panditrao bakhar, Pratinidhi bakhar, a chronological note from Dhar and horoscope published in Kavyeitihas Samgraha a periodical of K.N. Sane, and a chronology of the Chhatrpatis published in the Bharatvarsha periodical of D.B. Parasnis. This long list of sources alone is enough to show the deep interest taken by Tilak to establish a single point, namely the birth date of Shivaji.

He did not find a single correct date in all these sources which would fulfil all the tests of astronomical calculations. Out of the 14 sources, 9 give 11 different dates, and the remaining five are unanimous on one date but it does not pass the test of astronomy. He thus came to the conclusion that there are four major versions found in these sources and one has to decide the exact date of birth only after examining them. These probable four dates are:

1. Shaka 1549, Prabhav, Vaishakah Shudha 2, Saturday (7th April 1627)



2. Shaka 1549, Prabhav, Vaishakha Shudha 5, Tuesday (10th April 1627)
3. Shaka 1548, Kshaya, Samvatsar, Vaishakh 2, Monday (17th April 1626)
4. Shaka 1548, Kshaya, Vaishakha Shudha 5, Thursday (20th April 1626)

In these four versions, the month Vaishakha is common in all, but there is a difference in the tithi or day. As regards the difference in the year, Tilak rejects the year 1548 on the basis of the references to the date of his death which was shaka 1602, Chaitra Shudha 15, Sunday (4th April 1680) as all sources were unanimous on it, and after calculating the span of the career of Shivaji, he fixed the year 1549 as the year of birth.

He finally accepted a date which was nearer to the bakhar than that of Rajwade and it was Shaka 1549, Pravhav Samvatsar, Vaishakha Shudha Pratipada (nor 2nd or 5th Thursday, Ashwinin nakshatra (not Rohini) equivalent to 6th April 1627. However, he confessed that there was good deal of confusion regarding the date of birth of Shivaji, and appealed to the research scholars to express their views on this issue which he would gladly publish in his newspaper. He requested the organizers of the birthday celebrations to be held on Vaishakha Shudha pratipada from 1900 onwards.

The year and month, thus continued to be followed by the people for a fairly long time till new sources came forward. In the subsequent years two major sources namely the Jedhe Shakavali and the Sanskrit epic Shiva Bharat and epic composed by Kavindra Paramanand the poet laureate of Shivaji. However, when Tilak wrote the article in 1900 non of these sources of information were available to him. His search for getting an authentic source continued and he succeeded in laying his hands on the Jedhe Shakavali which he secured from Daji Saheb Jedhe Deshmukh of Kari (Bhor princely state ) by 1906-7 but could not find enough time to analyse it and so published it as he found it with a brief note, in the journal of the Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal (BISM) in 1916. The other source i.e. Shivabharat came to light only in 1927, which confirmed the date given in the Jedhe Shakavali.

A learned research scholar Dattopant Vinayak Apte of the BISM considered afresh in the light of these two new sources and rejected the findings of both Rajwade and Tilak, and declared Shaka 1551, Shukla Samvatsar, Falgun Vadya Tritiya, Friday, nakshtra, hasta, equivalent to 19th February 1630, as the correct date of Shivaji's birth. For a long time historians like G.S. Sardesai, Jadunath Sarkar and others, however did not accept the date advocated by the BISM, and the celebrations continued to be held at two different dates. After the information of Samyukta Maharashtra, the Government appointed a Committee of historians in 1960 to give a finality to this long pending controversy. But the majority decision of the committee submitted in 1966 was not implemented by the Government till February 2000, and now it is officially declared that Falgun Vadya Tritiya of Shaka 1551 (1630 AD) approved by the majority and advocated by the BISM as the authentic date for the celebration of Shiva Jayanti. Thus after nearly hundred years i.e. since Tilak wrote his article in April 1900, the controversy is now resolved. Tilak must get credit for this.

Tilak wrote a number of articles on Shivaji and other historical matters connected with Maharashtra since 1895 practically till the end of his life in 1920. During his long imprisonment at Mandalay (1908-1914) it is discovered from his note book, among other things, like history of Hinduism, Indian nationality, Hindu law, Geeta Rahasya, etc. he had even planned to write a biography of Shivaji. He also jotted down the purpose of his Shiva Charitra. According to him, Shivaji did not establish Maratha power for self but for the people of Maharashtra as a whole; his example was emulated by Peshwa Bajirao I, who by elevating Shinde, Holkar, Gaikwad, to the status of Maratha Sardars tried to show that this Maratha nation was for all. The lesson which Shivaji's life teaches, according to Tilak, was that leaders should not exploit caste, emphasis should be on talent and quality irrespective of the individual's social status.

## INDIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO HISTORY

Tilak believed that the historical research should be the first duty of any emerging nation. In his article in the Kesari of 9th May 1915, he applauded the selfless efforts of Sane, Khare, Rajwade and Parasnis in promoting historical research in Maharashtra. He



appealed to the younger generation that they should emulate the example of these pioneers, who have sown the seeds of historical research in this land. He warned them in these words, "Your ancestry lost the kingdom; if you lose history, your progeny will lose its dharma i.e. duty; Maharashtra will not only be forgotten, but will be destroyed completely; you should try to avoid this calamity." He gave opportunities to many scholars to publish their researches, or controversial issues, in the Kesari or the Mhratta and thus encouraged public debate. Rajwade, Khare, Parasnis, Bhanu, Paranjape, Jinsiwale and many others responded to this appeal of Lokmanya.

Tilak had to face many objections raised by his enemies against the Shivaji Movement which he had launched on a mass scale since 1895-96. It was considered by some as a movement not for renovation of Shivaji Memorial, but to establish Shivaji as an incarnation of God; an anonymous person called himself as Historicus, in an article in the Times of India 1899 said, "Shivaji's Raj was destroyed by the Brahmins and they are the leaders now to revive his Raj". To Tilak, according to some, Shivaji was not an academic issue but a political one causing Hindu-Muslim riots.

Lokmanya Tilak strongly refuted all these charges levelled against him. To him, Shivaji was not a god, but a superman, appears every now on this earth, as per sermons of Geeta Sambhavami Yuge Yuge, to surmount the difficulties of humanity. Shivaji is remembered for his nation building activities; biographies of great leaders like Shivaji, are the sources of inspiration to the younger generation. To those who found fault with the brahmin leadership of the movement and doubted that it might be reduced to Ramnavami festival in the long run, Tilak gave fitting reply in his article Shivaji and Brahmin by citing many examples from history, and charged the critics that their main purpose in calling it a brahmin movement was to create a rift between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmans of Maharashtra.

To the charge that the two festivals namely the Ganesh (1893) and Shivaji (1896) caused Hindu-Muslim riots of 1893, 1894, 1896 in Maharashtra, Tilak gave a strong reply in his article in the Mhratta of June 24, 1906. Shivaji he declared, was not an enemy of the Muslims. Had there been a Muslim in his place under those circumstances, he too would have been honoured. Who was he?

Where was he born? are minor issues. One who inspires is great. We are not against a festival being started in favour of Akbar or any other Hero from old Indian History....It is a sheer misrepresentation to suppose that the worship of Shivaji includes invocation to fight either with the Mohamedans or with the Government. In support of the Shivaji festival, Tilak argued that man had become an animal, and Shivaji made him a human being with a desire to be free, and realize that swarajya was his fundamental right. He, therefore, believed that the purpose of Shivaji festival was promotion of patriotism and nationalism among the people of this country.

Once, a young historian, D.V. Apte, to whom a reference has been made earlier, asked Tilak, "My friends say that all research in History is useless and unnecessary; one would hardly get anything out of it, it is a sheer waste of time, and a great headache, so give it up and do something concrete."

Lokmanya replied, "Listen to your friends and do what you want to do with all might and determination. Research cannot be done by all, it is a privilege of the chosen few. It depends on one's liking and aptitude. Research should be done for the sake of research only. One cannot show the tangible results of historical research immediately. But research is such a thing which should not be avoided by one who is interested in it. Every activity should not be motivated by material gain. Man works both for his maintenance as well as for satisfying his urge for pure knowledge. It depends on the nature and character of man, to which he should give priority. One can hardly explain to a common man the ecstasy one gets through research resulting in the advancement of knowledge." This summarizes Tilak's views on historical research. For want of time Lokmanya Tilak could not pay much attention to historical research but he knew the relevance of history, and how to reconcile historical research for political purposes, as well as for advancement of knowledge, and therefore, his contribution to historical research deserves attention of scholars and political leaders of modern times.

The last year of the 20th century is an appropriate time to look back and take a review of the historical changes that this century has brought. It was a period of transition and so of confrontation on various social issues. Women's education and overall reforms



in women's social status was one such hot issue that had caught the attention of all social thinkers in particular and society in general. Especially the last two decades of the 19th century and the first three decades of the 20th century is the period of the tussle between radical social reformists and orthodox Hindu traditionalists over the education of women-whether they should at all be educated and if so what kind of education they be given. Being a hard patriarchal society, no one thought it worth considering what were the views of the women over their own issues. Women played a secondary marginal role in society and that was mostly of a housewife, who was caught in a trap of various age-old customs and traditions. In this context it would be interesting to see what views did a contemporary nationalistic leader, an editor of a newspaper and basically a teacher of a school and even society like Lokmanya Tilak holds about women's education.

The views of a person on any issue cannot be inspected arbitrarily. Especially when one talks of women's education, it is entangled with various issues of the period like child-marriages, dishevelled-widows, widow-remarriages etc. It is along with these issues that we have to study Tilak's views on women's education. It is also important to see a short history of women's education to get the idea of the social ethos on which Tilak put forth his views. Unless we compare Tilak's views with contemporary exponents of women's education like Mahatma Phule, Principal Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Vitthal Ramji Shinde and Maharshi Annasaheb Karve, we cannot evaluate Tilak's contribution to women's education. It is also important to note that the family in which one grows, the surrounding society that influences the shaping of one's opinions, the education one takes which decides one's preferences, and one's own temperament plays important roles in confirming one's views. Tilak's views should be examined on these grounds. Tilak was not a staunch radical reformist like Agarkar and the principal aim of his life was independence of India. His opinion that social reforms would take place gradually along with political reforms would have also played a definite role in deciding his views on women's issues. We will have to see his objectives and the way he proposed to achieve them in the light of this bigger aim. Whether what he foresaw turned out to

be true would also be an interesting point to observe. It is through these various angles that this paper tries to bring forth an overall picture of Tilak's views on women's education.

**TILAK'S VIEWS ON WOMEN'S EDUCATIONS**

It is with reference to this social ethos that the thoughts of Tilak on women's education are to be read. They are mostly expressed in the four editorials he wrote between September to October 1887 about a particular female high school. There is one more special editorial `Stree Shikshanachi Disha' [The Direction Of Women's Education ] written on March 16, 1888. There was a lot of discussion going on in the newspapers about a female high school established in 1884. Tilak thought that the founders of this school were neglecting the criticism against them, thinking that those who write against women's education were uncultured, uneducated and obstinate people. If the curriculum of this school had been made public before the school began, Tilak thought there would not have been misunderstandings about the school. The attempt to educate women would be successful according to him if the consent of the people is honoured.

He, like other so many people of his time, did not deny the necessity of education for women, but differed with the contents and the way it was given. He thought that the exponents of education should first think of the contemporary society and opinions of the masses before allowing their imagination a free play. Again and again Tilak emphasised not to neglect the psyche of the society and that the preferences should be made accordingly. Nothing could be achieved by neglecting the society. The second point he mentioned is that if half of the humanity is uneducated our goal will never be achieved, but that does not mean that the kind of education being given to man is appropriate for woman too. Their duties in this world are different, and so should be their education. Time and situation also demand this difference. The curriculum in the female high school is akin to that of boys' school. If women are forced to take this kind of education, society would never be benefited.

In the second article, he accepts that traditionalists agree with reformists that educated women would do their duties more efficiently; but disagrees about the duties of women in society.



Education to woman is not a new concept in our society. There are examples of scholarly women in our Puranas. But, sending women to schools to receive formal education like boys is a new concept borrowed from the English, and as in the case of other concepts borrowed from them, here too we are in the wrong. If English rule and education would continue for more than a hundred years, our families would imitate their lifestyle. He accepts that society is not stable, it should change according to time, situation and ruler but is of the opinion that attempts to bring reforms would never be successful if social conditions are not taken into consideration. Our families are different from English families and so should be our education.

Their girls do not marry at an early age, they stay with their parents till they reach the prime of their youth. They do not depend on their parents economically if they are educated and, and they get sufficient time to educate themselves as they marry late. They, like boys, help their families by earning money. Women can complete education in such social situations. What is the use of education in our society? Our girls have to marry before puberty, they have to live with in-laws after marriage. So, they do not require education for earning money. At the most, they have to be taught how to be good housewives, and the school which does not teach that, is useless and would never prosper. He does not like the criticism of some people when they say that educated women would wear boot and stockings like English madams and roam in Bund Garden with their Sahibs. His basic argument is, when the education given to boys is not wholly beneficial the consequences would be doubly harmful, if the same is given to girls. We imitate the English, but English women themselves are getting education only for the last twenty years or so, then why should we hurry to give it to our women? He thinks that the time is not ripe for women's education, and very sarcastically he adds, when marriages would take place at a later stage, when there would not be joint families, when restrictions of religion and morality would be loose, when middle class people would have enough to spare, when the English educated women, singing on piano, dancing a kindergarten dance, telling stories of Grace darling and Elizabeth, instead of Seeta or Ahilya, then only English educated women would be honoured in society.

We require women who care for our religion and household work, who know some reading and writing. The schools which will not produce such women are not required. Educate women for two or three hours in the interval, after they finish their daily chores. This education should be according to the laws of the Hindu religion and feminine duties. Such schools, where women of all religions come together and are taught by the English madams may suit the rich or the destitute, or to those women who have to earn their livelihood. This school will be a nuisance to middle class people. If reforms are brought about suddenly, they break the society and female schools are stepping on the same lines. Reforms are to be carried out very gradually, caring for the psyche of the society. Otherwise, reforms will never take root, and you will be cut off from the society.

In the third editorial (published on Oct. 11, 1887) Tilak warns the founders of female education to re-examine their objectives and to make appropriate changes in their curriculum. He also raises the question as to why people and government should spend money on such schools which are of doubtful use. Like boys' schools, girls' schools are already well settled. There is a scope for reform in these schools, but that does not mean there is a need to open new schools. We already have a female training college, with the thought that these women would teach in girls' schools. This high school does not have either young girls or training teachers. According to our religious traditions, girls marry before attaining puberty, and after marriage, they have to do household chores in their husbands' homes. That is why there are no married women in schools. After marriage, they even forget the alphabets which they once knew. This means that society does not get the benefit of educated women through girls' high school. If the female high school has the objective of doing away with this lacuna, we will have to see how many married Hindu women are there in this school.

The total number of married women is twenty. If women of other religions are excluded, one can see how few Hindu women are benefited by this school. He then goes on to accuse the management of the female high school that they have been carried away by imaginary reforms and have neglected completely the contemporary social situation. He is of the opinion that even if



high school education is the extension of primary education, it is not useful in general, for our women. It may be useful in England, where women can be clerks, lawyers, doctors or editors. He does not think that women should remain slaves in the hands of men, but he thinks that at least five hundred or even a thousand years should pass before the situation is changed. He underlines that marriage is a social contract in Western countries. Women marry at a later stage, and there too only a few years have passed when they have started taking professional training. Do we want our women to be clerks or writers? Those who are proud of the woman community would never like to think of our women as clerks being kicked by English Sahibs.

In summary, the education in female high school is useless except for a very few rich women, who, if they choose, can be writers. Our women should be given education to improve the household work. They should improve themselves by reading scriptures. As for the artists, their profession is the main thing and education subsidiary, so for the women, household work is the main thing and education is secondary. They are not supposed to neglect the work and run to school from 11 to 5 taking the guidance of Christian teachers for Western education. No one would be ready to spend the first fifteen or sixteen years of their life for such education. The house of in-laws is a workshop. The practical education that she will get here, no school can ever give. We are in need of that education which will not bring her out from this workshop, but which will teach her something suitable from our religion. In addition to this, if some people want western education they can avail of it.

The fourth editorial [Oct.25,1887 ] sarcastically addresses the reformists of women's education and elaborately puts forth his ideas. He says that he drastically differs from them about the duty of a person towards society. The reformists claim that a "man and a woman are both like a wheel of a cart called family. If one lags behind, the cart will fall into a ditch. A woman is a fellow-friend of a man. A man could never go forth keeping her behind. Education would not do harm to women as it has not done to men. " Tilak belittles the reformists saying that they live in dazed condition of mind and are blind to the actualities of our society. It is important to think of how life of human beings would be after

one thousand years but that does not mean to start the reforms immediately accordingly. As they say women would be free like men to choose their profession, there would not be slavery in marriage and the nation would prosper because both educated men and women would be working together.

This may happen but after 5 to 10 hundred years. The problem with which we are concerned is what kind of education should be given to our women to bring some change in their position. We are in search of such an institute that will give them more than primary education but will not hinder their womanly duties. Those who say that I am against women's education are perverse and prejudiced. It will take time to change the tradition of marriage before puberty. There can be a woman like Dr. Anandibai Joshi who will be educated and would do a profession like a man with the permission of her husband, but it will be an exception. We accept that if there are women like her we should help them go forth, but that will not achieve anything in general what we can achieve by a number of cultured women. They should be educated without disturbing their marriage life. Women's education in the real sense of the term will not begin till a number of married women are being educated. Reformists of women's education should never forget this. Formal education in high school is for boys, not for girls. They require different type of education that would help them to be good housewives. He thinks that the founders of female education know this, but turn a deaf ear to this reality. Sarcastically he remarks that he should admire them for their strategy in opening a boarding school in Pune for women. The question is would the quality women take admission in it? Would they declare how many girls above the age of 14 to 15 are there? He is sure that people will never send their married daughters in such boarding schools. At the most there would be some poor destitute women who want to become teachers. How is the internal management of the boarding school is not yet known. Those who have thought of such a boarding school must have been blind by the ideas of reforms. It may turn into a widow-house like the one Pandita Ramabai is going to open.

As religious reforms require mingling with masses, so does women's education. The women's community will not improve, if one or two women become M.D. or M.A. So thousands of rupees



that are being spent on female high school are only for the benefit of five to ten women. We do not envy them, but the Govt. should first see the welfare of the common masses and then of the rich. If they do not have that much funds, preferences should be given to reform the majority of people. It is surprising that at the end of this article he says that his thoughts may be incorrect but instead of pointing at his lacuna if someone obstinately and arrogantly calls him hypocrite, he will never tolerate it and will expose him before the society.

Two months after the publication of these articles Tilak thought that he should make his views more clear. He decided to write one more article [March 6, 1888] because his opponents vehemently criticized him for his conservative attitudes. He begins the article saying that he is much more an exponent of women's education than anyone else of his time. By nature his tendency is for women's education, but he thinks that as men and women have different roles to play in life, their education should also be different. Career women would always be minority so the founders of women's education should not think only of their needs. Housework and married life are the principle duties of a woman, she should be taught to read and write, but to make her study after the age of 16 is against her femininity and so is harmful. His main point was this, but according to him no body could point out any mistake in his thinking. Some objected that he is short-sighted and his thoughts do not go with his English education. These objections he thinks do not point any flaw in his thinking process and so he need not answer them, but as the lion does not hide in fear of an elephant, so does not he. He defends himself for the satisfaction of his opponents. He then quotes an article in a book published in the month of February of the same year called `Nineteenth Century.' The article is by one Miss Sivley and is about the curriculum in female high schools in England. She says, "that the duties of men and women differ and so should the courses. English schools do not keep this in mind and teach the same curriculum to boys and girls up to the age of 18. This happens because some scholars do not think there is difference between men and women. It is alright when they are small, but when they start growing the difference is visible. Boys are strong, stout and boisterous. They love outdoor activities, where girls are

by nature simple. They love indoor games. This difference develops with the age and is completely opposite at the end. A grown up person goes out of the house in search of a job, whereas a woman though married or unmarried looks after her house. As it is a duty of a man to earn money it is the duty of a woman to do the household work and to look after her children. This does not mean that men should dominate over women, but one should not interfere in other's field.Each one should take care how he or she excels in his or her duty. The curriculum in schools should be such that would teach them the excellence in their respective fields". At the end of his editorial Tilak notes that it is his modest request to reformists of women's education to think of these points seriously and bring the appropriate changes in practice.

To sum up, Tilak is of the opinion that there should be separate education for women that would make them better mothers, and better housewives. There is a lurking fear behind this position that the life-style of society would change by English education and by the imitation of western culture. He therefore rejects the concept of serving women and firmly believes that education plays a secondary role in women's life.

There are two types of reformists, those who want to impose reforms in spite of resistance and the others, who think social reforms will follow gradually with the changing time and political reforms. Tilak is the second kind of leader who did not want to disturb the contemporary social set up. The careful reading of his articles shows that he is not against women's education, but that he is afraid the haste of the reformists would disturb the public opinion against it. Tilak knows very well the psyche of our traditional Hindu society, and would oppose any decision taken hastily without probing the pros and cons. He is of the opinion that reforms are to be introduced according to the time, situation and the opinion of the masses.

If the masses are behind time, try to change their opinion, but never neglect them or never try to bring reforms without their acceptance. He insisted on the same view in the case of other social problems of the time. He strongly opposed any interference of government in the Hindu laws and traditions. Not only that he did not want law to be imposed against the shaving of widows, but that he did not even want our people to bring pressures on



bringing an end of this custom. Deenbandhu the news paper of Satyashodhak Samaj invoked the barbers to refuse to shave women. Agarkar also called the Brahmin society to take the warning seriously. Tilak on the other hand expressed his dislike for such invocations. He expressed his views that pressures should not be imposed on women, leave the question to them, and allow them to take their own decision. If one is ready to shave her head let her do so, At the same time he brought the stark reality on the social front that prohibiting this custom will not improve the condition of widows. Unshaven widows will suffer more. As they cannot remarry we should think positively about finding the means of their livelihood. If forced not to shave, they will prefer to die like Sati. These views show that Tilak knew the cruelty, wickedness, undue passion and selfishness of our men folk in depth. Even if he sounds orthodox traditionalist, he is more balanced and thoughtful on same occasions.

In cases of widow remarriages Tilak holds the same view of not stirring the feelings of society. When Agarkar congratulated Shri R. B. Joshi for remarrying his sister against the wishes of his parents, Tilak sympathizes with the parents and says that sons have no right to make their parents unhappy in an old age by going against their wishes. Indirectly it shows that he was against widow marriages. In 1893,when Dhondo Keshav Karve remarried a widow called Godubai Joshi, Tilak has written: "One has no right to pinch the society. In this we differ from the reformists. Parents are to be respected even if they are foolish. In the same way convictions of the traditional society also have to be respected. Society claims honour because it is always big in number." The last sentence clearly indicates why Tilak is called `Telya Tambolyanche Pudhari'. He has contacts even with the lowest strata of the social setup and knew very well that one can never lead unless one gets their backing. In a way sometimes he seems to cater to their tastes even against his will, but it's a part of his political strategy and he faithfully sticks to it, accepting compromises. It may be noted however that in his own personal life he carried out the reforms he advocated. He educated his daughters in the same female school which he criticized. He did not stick to Deopuja, Sandhya and other such everyday rituals. He attended widow remarriage parties, he freely interlined with

men of any creed, community and religion. Tilak was not at all a champion of orthodoxy. He stood for hastening slowly in bringing about social and religious reforms, and was against any sudden violent break with the past. He was a good progressive conservative Hindu, his beliefs were firm and this policy secured for him the support of the general masses.

Tilak was uncompromisingly against the attempts of Mr. Byramji Malbari to bring reforms through legislation. Ranade, Bhandarkar and Agarkar held that if the reforms initiated by the Government were calculated to serve the best interests of the people, they should not be opposed simply because the foreign Govt. sponsored them. Tilak was the only public man of his day to be wholly against the bill of the Age of the Consent. Here too, the way in which he spoke and wrote would show that he was quite reasonable and earnest about the cause of social reforms. He did not want to rush his people and get headlong into it. In this case of the Age of Consent, he suggested that the attainment of puberty should be made the legal age for consummation of marriage. As a spokesman of the common people, he wanted the Govt. to bend down to the will of the people. In the `Kesari' and the `Maharatta' he carried on an incessant campaign against Mr. Malabari, the social reformers and the Govt. Although the campaign failed and the Govt. carried through the legislation in spite of his opposition, he moved a resolution in the Bombay Provincial Social Reform Conference condemning the Govt. for not respecting legitimately and widely expressed public opinion.

He was beyond doubt in favour of social reforms but all that he wanted was that the initiative in that respect should be taken by educated Indians and they should primarily be achieved by educating the public. He inveighed against legislation to force the pace of reform among the ignorant masses because he believed that the method would not work and all such legislation would remain a dead letter. In the public meeting in Tulshibag under the presidentship of Rao Bahadur Nulkar, he put the proposal of social reforms, like girls should not be married before the age of 14,and boys before the age of 20. A man marrying again should marry a widow but no one should marry after the age of 40. Dowry should be abolished and widows should not be disfigured. Respecting masses does not mean accepting even the evil customs.



In many of his articles he has censured the aged people who generally married girls under the age of 14,with a sharp edge of his pen and has tried to emphasize the status of wife in one's life.

A woman, he says, is not a machine of producing children, nor a maid servant to devote her whole life in household work. How could a man be so empty headed like cattle to marry immediately after the death of his wife, whom he has accepted with the pledge, who shared his life through thick and thin, who took half of the responsibility of his family on her shoulders and with whom he had sexual intercourse for so many years? He occasionally admires the reformists that their objective to bring equality between men and women is praiseworthy, but instead of encouraging widow remarriages he suggests that they should bring a change in the tendency of men to marry even at the later stage of their life. Both men and women should be aware of the glorious life of Sanyasashram, which our religion insists after a certain age. To lessen the undue excessive importance of marriage is the true path towards reforms and is in defence of Hindu religion. His merciless logic and proficiency in Sanskrit lore adds such grace to the scholarly advocacy of his views, that even if one does not agree with his views, one becomes powerless in expressing one's disagreement.

But Tilak's efforts were futile because he found out that no one wanted to suffer and make sacrifices for his convictions and it dawned upon him that most of those who called themselves social reformers were not serious about practice and indulged merely in precept. In yet another episode of Pandita Ramabai, Tilak did not like her activities of opening a residential school, but Agarkar, Ranade and Bhandarkar were very enthusiastic about it. In the beginning, Tilak enrolled his name among the sympathisers of the school after satisfying himself that the Indian girls were not compelled to attend Christian prayers, and the education was only secular. He soon discovered that the condition was not being observed and the institution was functioning as a proselytizing body. He protested against it. The Sudharak wrote tauntingly about Tilak, questioning his motives and calling him an opponent of women's education. Ultimately, Agarkar was convinced of Ramabai's double dealings, and quietly removed his niece from the school. Tilak's triumph was indisputably established

in this controversy. It was his intelligence, insight and thorough understanding of the motives of the people that lead him to see through some contemporary cases.

Tilak was born and brought up in a traditional Brahmin family of Gangadhar Shastri, well known for piety and learning. In general his views about women were never liberal. He agreed with what Manu said "Z ór ñdmV§Í` _hoV". He naturally symbolizes the deep-rooted patriarchal culture of Hindu society where women have a secondary and marginalized position. It is not surprising therefore, that Tilak adhered to the side of Dadoji against Rakhamabai. In an article on March 19. 1887, in Kesari, Tilak criticizes Rakhamabai very harshly as a foolish hater of our customs and traditions. He calls her act as a licence for extra-marital relationship, and holds her responsible for sowing the seed of dissatisfaction in hundreds of otherwise happy families. In comparison he has showered his praise on Anandibai Joshi for devoting her whole life for the cause of betterment of Hindu women and foresees that she will remain immortal in the hearts of Hindu men and women.

Tilak's views on women's education, if compared with his contemporary reformists, can be evaluated in the light of history of women's education. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, though preceded Tilak, had opened a school for girls in 1848 in Pune. He was strongly opposed by society and even by his own parents. He taught his wife Savitribai, who afterwards became a teacher in this school. Both of them continued their work of women's education up to the lower levels of society. The then education officer Cady gave financial assistance to this school in 1852.

Agarkar, a radical reformist in Maharashtra was an exponent of women's education, who held such strong progressive views which were not easily acceptable to the contemporary society. He was an individualist and firmly believed in the equality of sexes. He was of the opinion that women's education should be made compulsory by law. If a woman has to take care of her child, it is a crime to keep her illiterate. He laughs at Tilak's statement that we had a tradition of women's education. There is no proof that women were given formal education, nor were they taught to read and write at home. In all developing countries, women are getting education, while we have kept them locked in our houses.



We should encourage them to come into the light, choose a profession they like, secure higher degree, and marry when they like. He was very sure that these reforms would take place very soon and the credit to foresee this correctly should be given to him as the present position of women shows, whereas Tilak thought it will take at least five to ten centuries to bring about the educational reforms in women. Agarkar was against child marriage and asked the society how could a woman continue her education if she is married at an early age, if she delivered a number of children and was expected to look after them. Either they should not marry till they complete higher education or the in-laws must give them liberty like unmarried women to continue their studies. He says that our society suffers and does not prosper because half of its number has been prevented from making use of its intelligence. Boys and girls should be given co-education so that there would be a healthy competition among them and each one will get a position according to his intelligence.

Agarkar's thoughts were poles apart from those of Tilak's. Both of them harshly criticized each other over their views. Agarkar had the courage and daring to say whatever he felt right despite the opposition of the masses whereas Tilak always found the golden mean, made compromises and stuck to the orthodox Hindu tradition. Another of his contemporaries Maharshi Annasaheb Karve was an activist in the real sense of the term. He married a widow, opened a primary and high school for adult women, a boarding school for destitutes and widows. The culmination of his work is seen in the establishment of a unique university only for women. He introduced subjects like Home-science, child-development in the curriculum of the degree examination. In his memoirs, he mentions that he met Tilak and told him about this university but Tilak refused to give him anything in writing in recommendation of this university. He said education has made men sceptic, he did not want women to be come so. In actual fact, Tilak's ideas about women's education were being brought into reality by Karve, but there was a basic difference in the view of these two thinkers. Karve believed that in terms of intellectual qualities, there is no difference between man and woman. They are equal yet their fields differ so should their curriculum. Another thing was that he wanted women to do jobs and become economically independent, the idea Tilak would never tolerate.

Tilak was of the view that he too was a reformist but his ways are different than the radical reformist like Agarkar. Tilak's speculations about women's education failed. In spite of his opposition, the female high school prospered and there were more such schools where women started taking English education. It means that the society did not wish to keep its women in their traditional status. Whereas Agarkar thinks of women in general, Tilak's views are confined only to middle class brahmin women. He opposed compulsory primary education for girls. But a big procession of women under the leadership of Vitthal Ramji Shinde followed by thousands of untouchable women and Ramabai Ranade followed by thousands of higher class women proved that general masses were for compulsory primary education for women. A meeting was called in Kirloskar Theatre under the presidentship of Chief Officer Shankarrao Bhagwat when Tilak was a special invitee to convince people of not making primary education compulsory for women. Vitthal Ramji Shinde opposed Tilak and suggested him not to deliver a lecture. Tilak neglected him and started to talk, when people threw eggs on him. He was saved by Vitthal Ramji and his son. The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of this type in Gayakwadvada also ended in commotion. The two incidents show that time was changing and Tilak could not estimate it.

One thing has to be noted in justification of Tilak that Tilak's views about women's education came as a reaction to the extreme views of the reformists. It was in defence of the Hindu traditional cult that he had to take this position as a representative of its past glory. There is no separate theoretical presentation on this issue. So his views are limited and confined only to the occasional incidents. Tilak afterwards concentrated his energies more in politics and less in social reforms. He felt it more prudent to attack the foreign rule and concentrate upon capturing political power and use it as a means of bringing about social reforms. He became a national leader and tried to revive nationalistic spirit among people. If Tilak had joined hands with reformists about women's education, his public image would have helped the spread of women's education earlier. But then Tilak as a political leader would not have emerged as strongly as he did. Education cannot be thought of without consideration of the language. The countries



in which the language of their people is adopted from elementary to post-graduate levels, it is automatically developed and enriched. But with the British rule a colonial country like India faces a very unfavourable condition. The medium of instruction, administration, public relations, everything becomes problematic. Earlier Sanskrit was the language of the masses. There are many regional languages, but hardly ever the conditions were favourable for their development. They are inevitable in the day to day life but never got a respectful place under the British rule. Learning in one's mother tongue is a natural process but in India the whole system became an un-natural one. The nationalistic education conceived by Chiplunkar and others had the underlying principle of giving the mother tongue, its due place and respect. Obviously Tilak has written at length about this problem in his articles on nationalistic education. At times his comment is very sharp. In a speech in 1908 on Nationalistic education he says,

"English is a very strange language. One cannot master it fast. It is not easy. Just because it is the language of the rulers, we have to learn it; it is but a burden for us. We stand to lose because the medium of instruction is not Marathi. Why do we need to speak for two hours in English? Is there even one British officer who can speak Marathi? But hundreds of us speak English. We have wasted years on learning English. If the knowledge I got was given in Marathi, all that I have learnt for 52 years could have been mastered at 25 or 30. We waste the valuable years in learning English. Educating a nation through a foreign language is subjugating it. Therefore the knowledge must be imparted in the vernacular. This will save students' life." In another lecture delivered in 1908 on this topic Tilak says, "Now a days education is nothing but the ability to speak and write English. But knowing the language is not gaining knowledge. Nowhere else do we find this compulsion of learning thoroughly a foreign language. Forced to learn through a foreign language, what could be learnt in a period of 7 to 8 years takes 20 to 25 years. We cannot do away with learning English altogether; but we do not have to be proficient in that language because it is the key to knowledge. Under the Muslim rule we had to learn the Persian language, but it was not burdensome."

In 1891, Tilak had written two articles entitled `English language and vernacular language'. He stressed that the language

of the ruling Britishers that is gaining importance in administration and education was once underdeveloped. Learning French was a matter of prestige in England; but only when the Britishers rejected this foreign language and gave importance to their own language and when it was practised in all the walks of life did English become a developed and enriched language. Therefore the native Indians should realise that for their language to prosper, self-respect is what is needed. It is possible to make available the knowledge into the native languages through translations. English has become the language of knowledge only because the knowledge in other European languages was translated into English. Thus realising this secret of its prosperity we too can enrich our own languages. Instead, the educated amongst us are happy to use English and are neglecting their own language. This indifference of the educated is what is hampering the progress of indigenous languages like Marathi. In his speech in 1906 at the Mumbai Marathi Granthasangrahalaya Tilak had raised some points for the development of the Marathi language. He said, "The prosperity of the Marathi community and the growth of the Marathi language are interdependent. Your language will develop only if you yearn sincerely for it. Superficial remedies will be of no use. The undue importance to English is harmful for the growth of Marathi. In earlier times Sanskrit Pundits too were against Marathi, but the saints contributed to the progress of Marathi language. The pundits opposing Marathi used to converse in Sanskrit. But the educated of today are subjugating themselves to English and feel proud to use it everywhere. Even the talks on their religion are in English. This will definitely not make Marathi prosper, on the contrary, people will start to dislike it. A child reared by the maid does not care about his mother." Similarly the educated who always turn to English have a contempt for Marathi. This attitude must be changed first. It is not enough that Marathi becomes the language of knowledge; it should also be the language of communication. There is a progress on this front.

On various occasions Tilak has talked about many matters like the education policy of the government, the state of the universities, the low level of knowledge imparted to the students, the attitude of the educated and the government towards the vernacular languages etc. to criticize the selfish educated and the government. As the vernacular languages had no place in the



university curriculum, they could not prosper and people started neglecting them. It is not enough to include these languages to study certain books written in those languages; at least some subjects must be taught through them. Then alone the vernacular languages will prosper. Only literary books do not bring about the progress of a language. Only when Science, administration, judiciary and markets uphold the use of a language does it progress. English is not rich only with Shakespeare and Milton, but because it embraces all the fields of life, it has gained its popularity. But the universities here do not intend to act for the cause of the indigenous languages. Their education does not encourage research and scholarly pursuits. What all the universities are doing is only to supply obedient servants for the smooth functioning of the administration. The universities today have become labour suppliers. One more reason for the inferior quality of knowledge is the third or fourth rate professors that are sent from Britain. They have limited knowledge and do not like to teach. In these circumstances it is but inevitable that selfish graduates are churned out. As the number of graduates is increasing more than the jobs available, the government has adopted the strategy of making the examination increasingly difficult and reducing the number of universities. Thus Tilak has heavily criticized the education system with appropriate examples and has substantiated his argument. But he has not blamed the government alone; the narrow minded and enslaved educated are equally targeted. In 1904 Tilak wrote an article titled `The prosperity of Marathi language'. In the beginning he has exposed the ignorant prejudice of a British officer named Birdwood regarding the Marathi language. This Mr. Birdwood was of the opinion that "Marathi has become impure because of the Marathi newspapers". On the contrary, Marathi has become very forceful thanks to journalists from the days of Balshastri Jambhekar to Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, insisted Tilak. However he expressed his concern over the contraction of the sphere of its expansion in India. He pleads that the Marathi people, inspiring from the Bengali, Hindi and Gujarati communities, should create a central institution for the protection and development of Marathi.

In his article titled `Series of text books for schools' Tilak has attracted attention on an important issue. Tilak has heavily criticized the fact that these books are being prepared by the

MacMillan Company in England instead of the local writers. The real danger as he saw was the inculcation of `loyalty to the British' instead of national pride. The British have already weakened the peoples of India by taking away their weapons, now they want to see to it that the children become mentally feeble too. Even the private institutions do not protest in this regard because the education department has gained control over them by sanctioning grant-in-aid. In 1906 Tilak wrote three articles titled `The growth of Maharashtrian Language'. Few days before writing these articles was established the `Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad' a central, representative institution. The first article deals with the birth of Marathi Language, the period of 1000-1200 years of its existence, the dangers faced in the form of Muslim regime, the role of devotion-professing saints in adopting Marathi as the language of expression and there-by protecting and perpetuating the language. He expresses his gratitude towards the saints who helped the widespread of Marathi. The second article recognizes the role of Shivaji and the Maratha Kingdom in the rise of prestige of the Marathi Language. He stresses the fact that a language prospers with its rulers. The Maratha Kingdom was instrumental for the spread of Marathi in the North upto Atak and in the south upto Tanjore. Other regions attached prestige to the ability to understand or speak Marathi only because it was the language of the rulers.

Marathi lost its importance with the British rule. That is the root cause of its decline. Now people do not feel strongly about their religion nor are they anxious to uplift their language. Having accepted the dominance of the English language, the knowledge in Marathi has become restricted. Translating from English will help only upto a certain limit. Only when our writers will start expressing themselves with a zest for their country and language, will the Maharashtrian language grow in quality.

The then Education Ministry had appointed a committee to prepare textbooks in Marathi. This committee had given some suggestions about the graphemics Marathi (i.e. devnagri). Tilak was against the idea of this committee being allowed to interfere in graphemics and wrote an editorial to express his opposition. If the system recognized by the education department is rejected the situation will be chaotic. In fact, it is the task of the grammarians to state their opinions, there should be a good discussion at length



and then alone could be decided what to include and what to reject. And people will accept whatever is reasonable. The main objection Tilak has raised is quite different. That is why title of his article reads `Murder of our alphabet'. The committee, while preparing the new textbooks, had suggested that initiation to the alphabet should not be done in the traditional order of `k' `kh' `g', `gh', but `g' `m', `bh', `n' instead. Tilak is strongly against this suggestion. This will be but showing deep ignorance about a system recognized to be `scientific' since the last three thousand years. He quotes Prof. McDonel regarding the Sanskrit alphabet (which is also the alphabet of Marathi). Tilak questions the authority of the committee to suggest changes in alphabets and its order certified to be scientific even by western scholars. He has appealed to the public to send written protests if such erroneous decision is imposed. (However, it should be noted that Tilak's objections are based on a misunderstanding. The committee had not suggested any changes in the order of the alphabet; it had only suggested that the graphemes with similar strokes be clubbed together while introducing those letters of alphabet. Tilak never mentioned that the order of our alphabet is phonetically very good but not from the graphemics point of view. That is why he has conveniently misrepresented the committee. Perhaps he disapproved of the appointment of such a committee in the first place.)

**ORTHOGRAPHY OF MARATHI**

In 1904 Tilak had written four editorials on this topic. In those days there was a controversy among researchers. Three pundits called Mr. Sane, Godbole and Hatwalne had written `Marathi bhashechi lekhan paddhati' to suggest some changes in the prevailing rules. The conformists had highly objected to these reforms. They were even scorned at as three Munis. Tilak kept from using any abusive language but launched a serious discussion about the academic and theoretical aspects of the problem of orthographic reforms of the Marathi language. Mr. Sane was part of the Books Committee formed to suggest such reforms. Objecting to such an intervention of the government was also one of reasons why Tilak wrote four editorials on this subject. According to Tilak more than grammarians, the final decision lies in the hands of people who use the language. Many forms considered incorrect

by the grammarians are found to be in use. The Sanskrit lovers want Marathi to follow the Sanskrit ways of expression, some Marathi lovers insist that rules of Marathi should be according to Marathi alone. Some give importance to the pronunciation, some find it fit to consider the etymology and common practice.

Tilak observes that the Marathi diction is not uniform. It varies from place to place. It is not always possible to write according to the pronunciation. English has contradictions and irregularities par excellence in the spoken and written language. Even in Marathi the /a/ sounds in ghara, matha, natha is not alike. The first is what is termed as `udatt' or well-articulated and the second `unudatt' or not well-articulated. But there is no specific symbol to distinguish between the two. Paahaa, Raahaa have their forms in practice as pahaa, rahaa, that is the /a/ sounds here is once not-well-articulated and once well-articulated. The concept of long and short sounds also changes from language to language. In short it is easier said than done to write exactly the way you speak. The grammarians are the rulers of the language, but with limited powers. The final powers must be with the people who practice it.

Marathi is not yet a fully developed language but it is growing. It is not perfect like Sanskrit. Therefore some liberty has to be accorded in its orthography. It is not possible to make, once and for all, all the rules governing this language. It will be obstinate to say that no changes in the orthography are required. But it is not for the government to take any steps. Only expert Marathi scholars should do it. For this a representative institution should be founded. The problem of long and short vowels in Marathi is a complex one. Therefore we have to act with conscious discrimination and not stick to any lop-sided view. Same is the case with consonant ending words. The nasalisation symbols when not in practice should be omitted, but removing all the nasal symbols without discrimination will be wrong. If etymologically a nasal symbol is justified, we can keep it, otherwise not Marathi is a growing language and therefore we should bear in mind that all its rules cannot be determined for eternity.

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